Over 40 Artists Celebrate the
Work of **Charles M. Schulz**

PEANUTS®

A TRIBUTE TO CHARLES M. SCHULZ

Featuring an Introduction from
LINCOLN PEIRCE
and an Afterword from
PAIGE BRADDOCK

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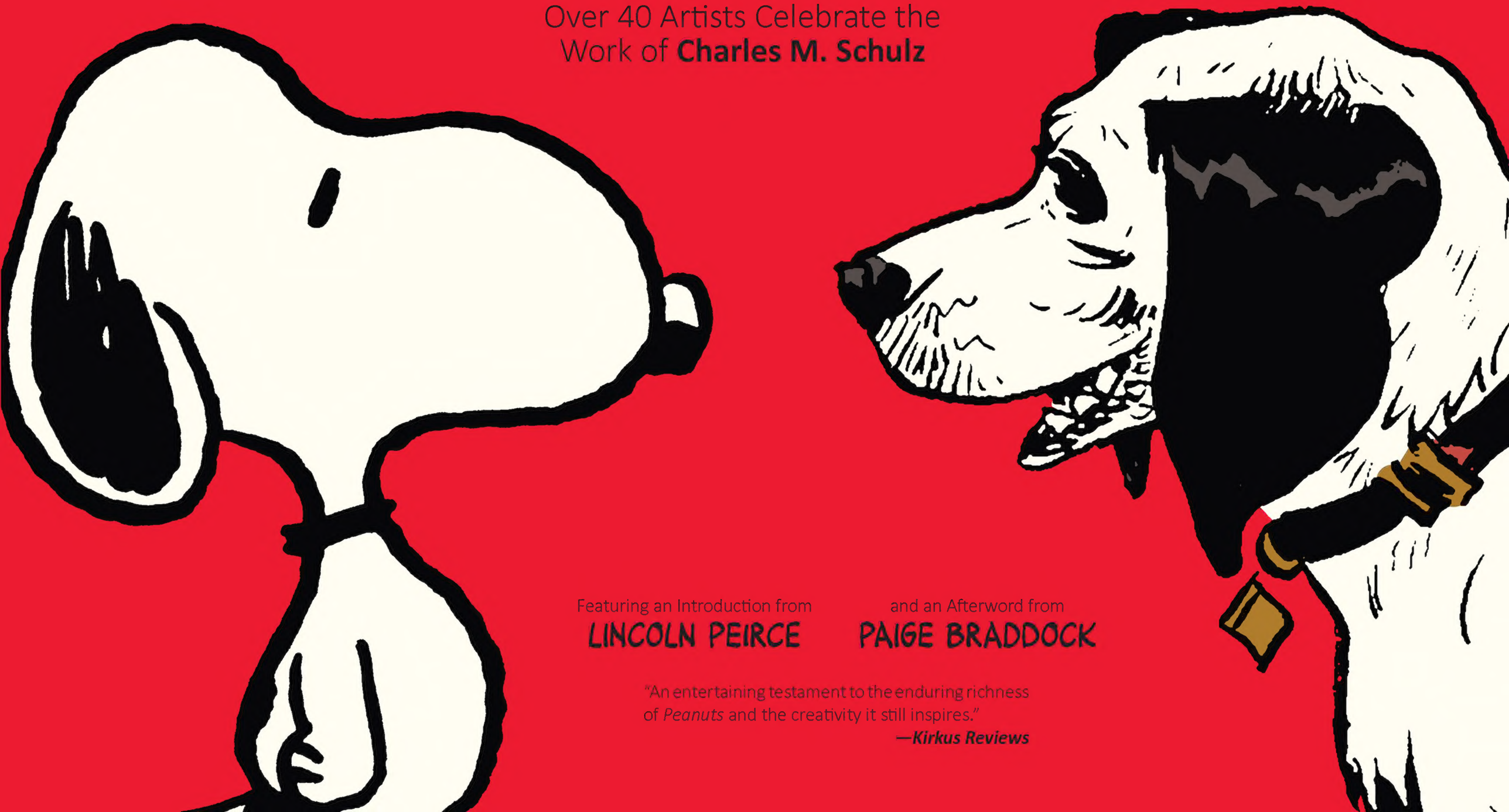

Featuring an Introduction from
LINCOLN PEIRCE

and an Afterword from
PAIGE BRADDOCK

"An entertaining testament to the enduring richness of *Peanuts* and the creativity it still inspires."
—Kirkus Reviews

DEDICATED TO CHARLES M. SCHULZ
AND THOSE HE HAS INSPIRED AND CONTINUES TO INSPIRE.

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Work of **Charles M. Schulz**

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65
POP CULTURE
PEANUTS

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INTRODUCTION

One of the things I like about my job is that it so frequently gives me the chance to visit elementary schools and talk to students about cartooning. I'm always welcomed with great enthusiasm, because even children who've never paid much attention to comics are usually happy to abandon their studies and watch some guy draw funny pictures on an easel in the cafetorium. During these visits, I have a routine: I show the kids a few tricks of the trade, like motion lines, speech bubbles, light bulbs, and so on. I demonstrate how the shape or direction of a single pen mark can abruptly transform a character from cherub to ogre and back again. I explain that cartoons—like books, movies, or the tall tales whispered around campfires—are stories, and that cartoonists are people who've found a unique way of telling them.

Then I show them a drawing I made when I was six years old. It depicts a round-headed boy wearing a shirt with a distinctive zigzag stripe, carrying in his outstretched hands a supper dish loaded with dog food. The boy's head is lopsided. His legs and feet are missing. It's not a particularly good drawing. But I treasure it. It's one of the few artifacts of my childhood that I managed to save, and it is clearly one of the early, uncertain steps on what I was already hoping would be my lifelong journey. I'd decided I wanted to be a cartoonist. But there were no classes in drawing funny pictures back then; no after school workshops for like-minded kids. So I did what children always do: I copied. I picked a cartoonist I admired and, mimicking his technique as best I could, began the humbling process of teaching myself to draw. I didn't quite realize at the time that drawing is only a small part of the skill set the job requires. One also needs to know how to write. Fortunately enough, the hero I'd chosen to emulate happened to be pretty good at that. His name was Charles Schulz, and for nearly fifty years he created some of the greatest stories ever told—four panels at a time.

Those four panels were what made me fall in love with *Peanuts*. Schulz, whose friends called him Sparky, got his comic strip up and running in 1950. When I discovered it nearly twenty years later, I had no idea that *Peanuts* was already universally regarded as a masterpiece. I only knew that something about the format of the daily strip—four panels lined up in a neat little row or stacked like building blocks—seized my imagination and held on tight. I was just starting to notice the comics in our local newspaper, and *Peanuts* looked different from anything else on the page. It was smaller than other strips; the panels were always identical in size and shape; and Sparky's drawings were bold, simple, and wildly entertaining. I fell in love. This strip, unlike all the others with their complicated backgrounds and fussy cross-hatching, had a style that spoke to me. As I grew older though, I realized that what set *Peanuts* apart wasn't how it looked. It was how it felt. This was what it was like to be that round-headed kid carrying the supper dish. This was what it meant to be a boy named Charlie Brown.

Good ol' Charlie Brown. He was a kid who failed at almost everything he tried; who was repeatedly victimized by other children; who was profoundly lonely and deeply unhappy. And yet he became the greatest character in the most popular comic strip in the history of the world. Yes, in later years, Snoopy became the de facto star of *Peanuts*. But Charlie Brown was always the strip's

heart—trying, failing, and trying again. I could imagine what it was like to be Snoopy. But I KNEW what it was like to be Charlie Brown. Who didn't? Millions of readers just like me lived and died with every strikeout, every disastrous Valentine's Day, every football yanked away at the last moment. I loved Charlie Brown so completely that his struggles sometimes brought me to tears. Why, I wondered, did he always have to lose? Why couldn't poor Charlie Brown win, just once? Years later, I read an interview with Sparky in which he provided the answer: because losing is funnier than winning. He was right. *Peanuts* wasn't always light reading—it could be philosophical, heartbreaking, ironic, and even spiritual—but it was, first and foremost, a comic strip. And it was hilarious.

My favorite *Peanuts* storyline appeared in the summer of 1973. Charlie Brown develops a strange rash that makes his noggin look like a baseball, and starts wearing a paper bag over his head to hide his condition. His pediatrician sends him off to camp to recover. There, to Charlie Brown's astonishment, he is elected camp president. It's a joke at first, a prank hatched by a couple of kids to poke fun at the boy wearing the paper bag. But something unexpected happens: the job suits him. He becomes well-liked and respected. The older campers refer to him affectionately as "Sack" and credit him with improving camp conditions; the younger ones seek him out for advice and approval. A success for the first time in his life, he sends an ecstatic letter home to his parents. "Life here at camp is wonderful," he writes. It's masterful storytelling: Sparky turns Charlie Brown's childhood embarrassment—the skin rash and subsequent bag-wearing—into a chance encounter with triumph. And it's great cartooning, too: the drawings of Charlie Brown wearing the paper bag still crack me up, more than four decades later. But as with all things *Peanuts*, there is an inescapable sadness beneath the surface. It's only with his identity concealed that Charlie Brown gains the friendship and esteem he has always craved. He understands that he could never have achieved these milestones as his ordinary self, but wistfully concludes that he can't wear a mask forever. Eventually, he knows, he must become Charlie Brown again. And he does.

What a story. It's *Peanuts* at its very best: sweet, somber, and very, very funny. And it unfolds over the course of only twenty-two daily comic strips. Do the math. Sparky told this epic tale in a grand total of eighty-eight panels. The man was a genius.

Time has a way of marching on. I'm older now than Sparky was when he penned that story. The children in the schools I visit hadn't even been born when he retired. It doesn't matter. Whenever I show a slide of Charlie Brown or Snoopy, hundreds of faces light up, and hundreds of voices start to cheer. I know how they feel. The students' enthusiasm bears me back to my own childhood, when my dreams of becoming a cartoonist were fueled by the artistry of one man: Charles Schulz. I had good taste in heroes. Sparky has been my inspiration, and his characters my companions, for nearly all of my life. I still love *Peanuts*. I will always love *Peanuts*. Nothing I've ever read has meant as much.

—LINCOLN PEIRCE

LIFE IN HELL

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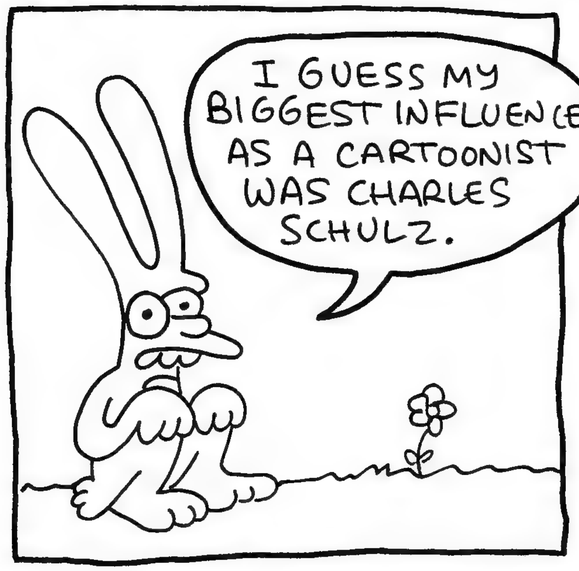
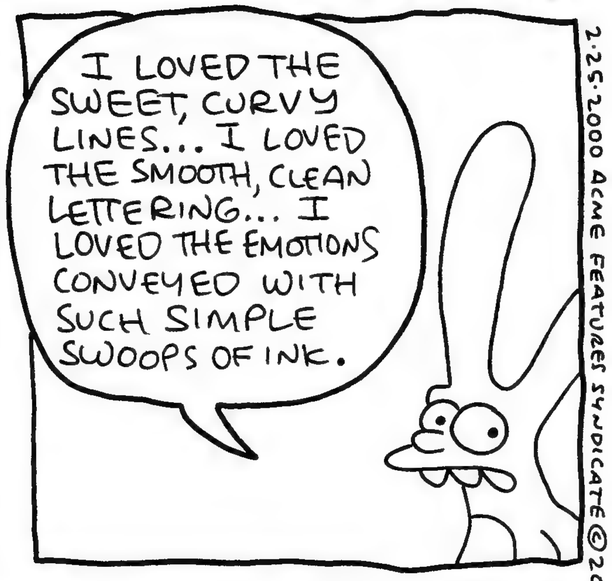
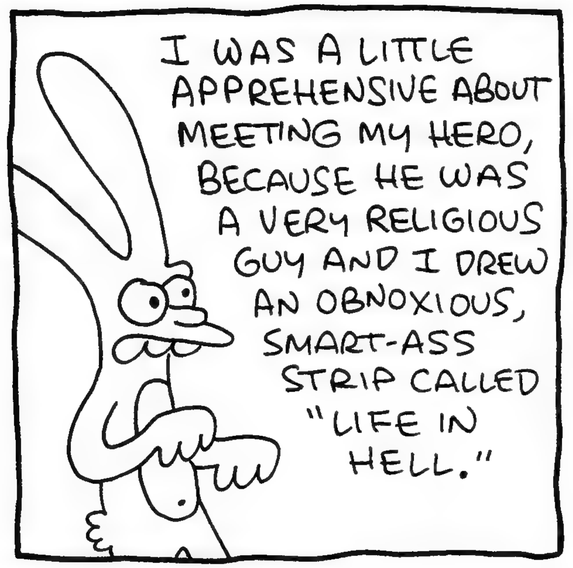



I LOVED THE SWEET, CURVY LINES... I LOVED THE SMOOTH, CLEAN LETTERING... I LOVED THE EMOTIONS CONVEYED WITH SUCH SIMPLE SWOOPS OF INK.

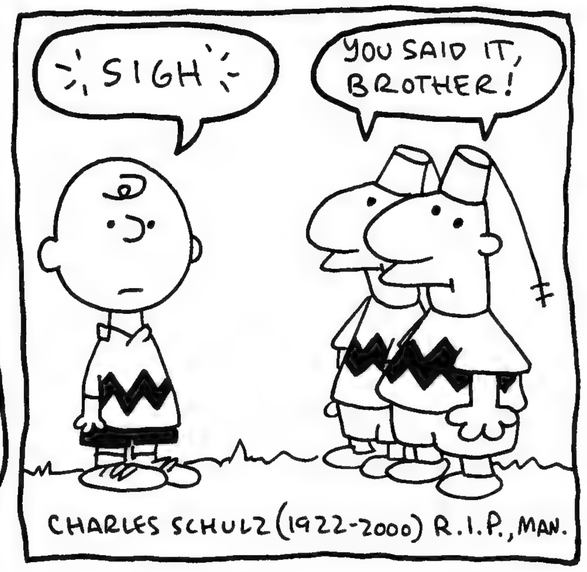
I THINK MY FAVORITE THING ABOUT "PEANUTS" WAS THE NEGATIVE STUFF: THE LONELINESS, THE ISOLATION, THE ABSENCE OF GROWN-UPS, THE UNREQUITED LOVE, THE FRUSTRATION OF CONTAINED RAGE.
FUNNY STUFF!

THE PUNCHLINE TO A STRIP I READ WHEN I WAS TEN YEARS OLD WENT RIGHT TO MY HEART. IT IS MY SECRET SLOGAN TO THIS DAY.
I'M TORN BETWEEN THE DESIRE TO CREATE AND THE DESIRE TO DESTROY.

LAST YEAR, I GOT WORD THAT CHARLES SCHULZ WAS HAVING LUNCH IN VENICE, AND EVEN THOUGH I WAS DEEP IN THE GRIP OF OVERWHELMING DEADLINES, I DROPPED EVERYTHING AND RACED ACROSS TOWN TO MEET THE MASTER.


I WAS A LITTLE APPREHENSIVE ABOUT MEETING MY HERO, BECAUSE HE WAS A VERY RELIGIOUS GUY AND I DREW AN OBNOXIOUS, SMART-ASS STRIP CALLED "LIFE IN HELL."

PLUS MY ODDBALL LITTLE CHARACTERS AKBAR AND JEFF ARE ALWAYS DRESSED IN CHARLIE BROWN'S ZIG-ZAGGY STRIPED T-SHIRT. WOULD SCHULZ SEE THIS AS AN HOMAGE OR A RIP-OFF?
HE WAS CHARMING, MODEST, AND VERY GRACIOUS. THE SUBJECT NEVER CAME UP. WHEW.



PEANUTS:
HMM...
...YES, SIR.
I SHOULD BELONG TO A WOLF PACK.
NOBODY'D MESS WITH YOU--
--IF YOU WERE A WOLF.
...?

AAAH...

--WHAT'S THE BEST HOUR OF THE DAY?

BEETHOVEN O'CLOCK!

HMM. 3RD SYMPHONY 2ND MOVEMENT.

"MARCIA FUNEBRE."

ADAGIO ASSAI.

1ST MEASURE

1ST MELODY.

...2ND MELODY.

THE 3RD.
AAH.
4TH
...5TH
HMMN
...THIS IS USUALLY THE PLACE WHERE THAT ...THAT GIRL APPEARS...
POLLUTING MY PEACE OF MIND...
RUINING MY CONCENTRATION..
I'M NOT GONNA LOOK.
I'M NOT GONNA LOOK...
PLONK
I'M NOT...

LOVE
"CHARLIE & SNOO"
Tony Millionaire

Curse You, White Beagle

SO... TELL ME ABOUT YOUR MOTHER.

ROGER LANGRIDGE

I KEEP TELLING YOU... THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH MY MOTHER.

YOU CONTRADICT ME AT YOUR **PERIL,** VON RICHTHOFEN!

VERY WELL... HAVE IT YOUR WAY.

DER PSYCHIATER IST

IN

Dr. VAN PELT

TELL ME, THEN, IF YOU'RE SO CLEVER... WHAT EXACTLY **IS** YOUR PROBLEM? AND WHY SHOULD I CARE?

IT'S... PERSONAL. **EMBARRASSING,** EVEN.

I... I'M BEING **TORMENTED** BY... **THE WHITE DOG.**

YOU MEAN "THE **BLACK** DOG." CLASSIC ZOOMORPHIC PERSONIFICATION OF THE DEPRESSIVE IMPULSE.

NO! IT'S **NOT** BLACK! I'VE **SEEN** IT! IT'S **WHITE** WITH **BLACK EARS...**

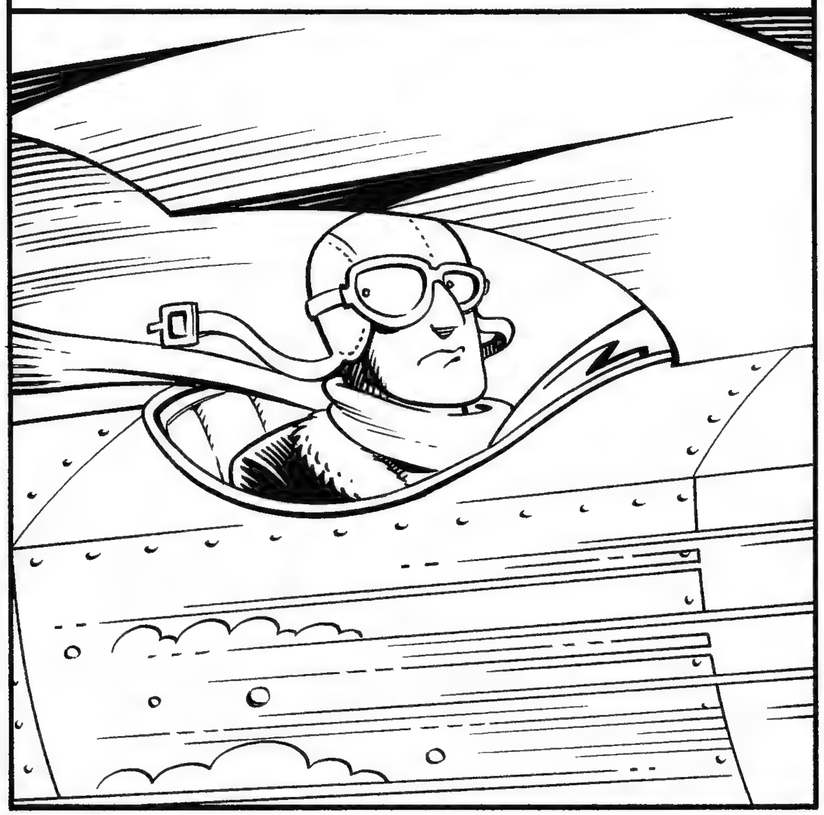
...AND IT'S FOLLOWED AROUND BY A FUNNY LITTLE YELLOW BIRD...

WHATEVER YOU'RE TAKING, I'M **DOUBLING** THE DOSE. THIS IS **HILARIOUS.**

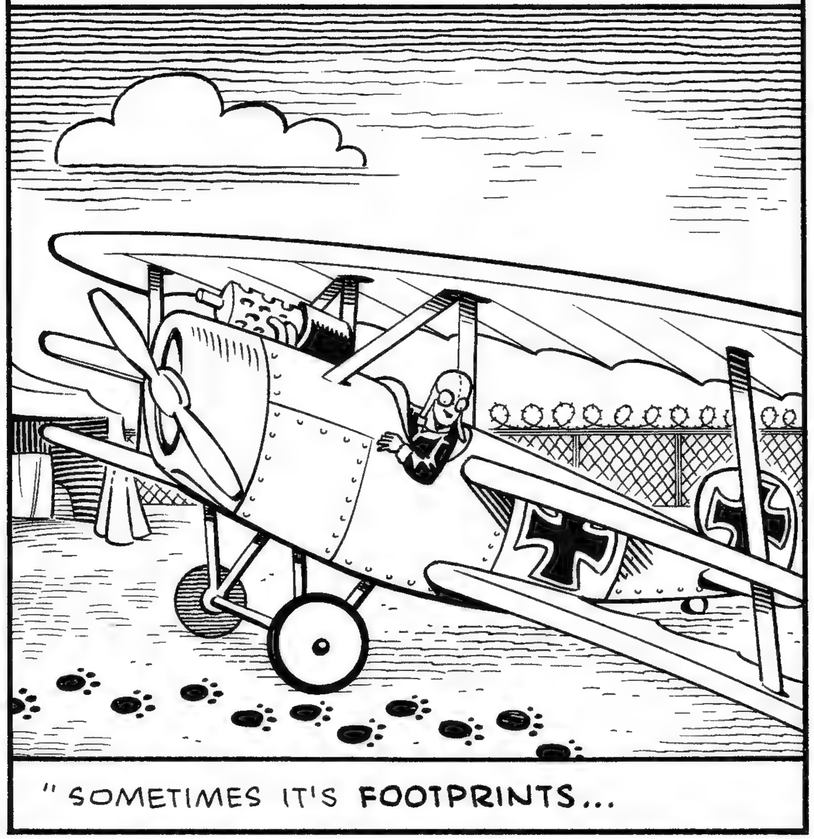
OH, I'M **FUNNY,** AM I? THE RED BARON IS A **JOKE** TO YOU!

LISTEN...

"I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG HE'S BEEN AFTER ME... BUT JUST LATELY I'VE BEEN NOTICING HIM **EVERYWHERE.**

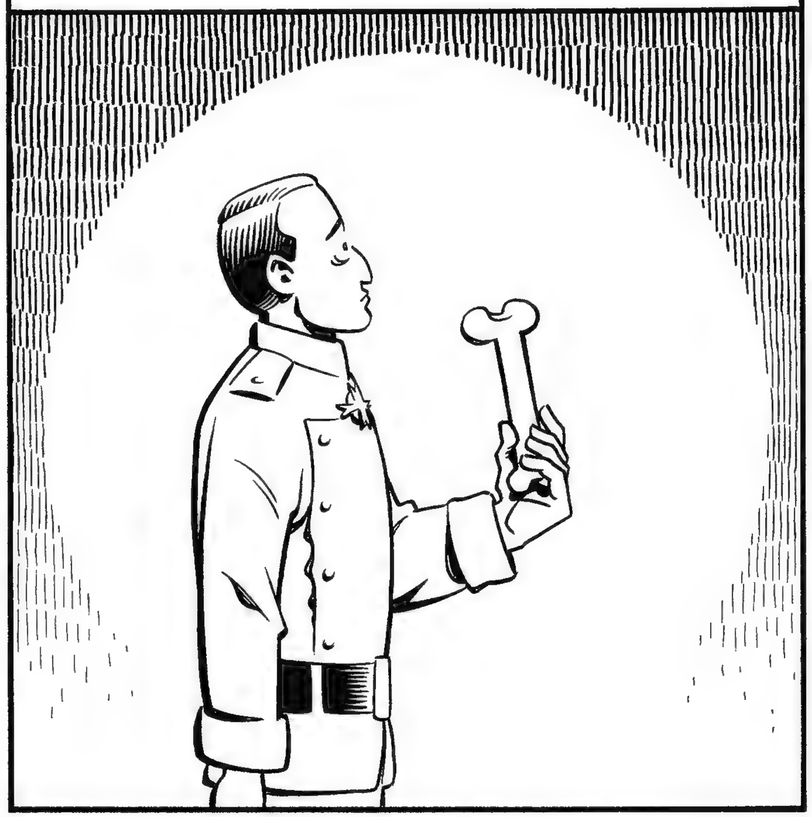


"MOST OF THE TIME, I DON'T EVEN **SEE** HIM... I JUST FIND **TRACES** OF WHERE HE'S BEEN.

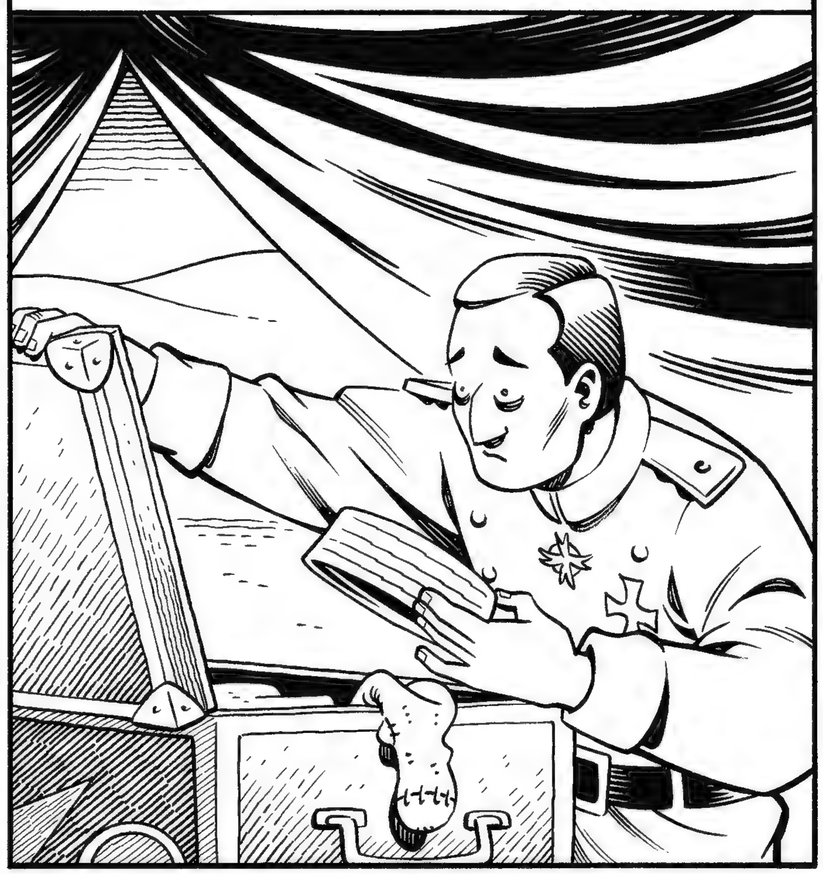


"SOMETIMES IT'S **FOOTPRINTS**...

"SOMETIMES IT'S JUST ITEMS HE'S LEFT BEHIND. ITEMS THAT I **KNOW** ARE HIS... JUST BY **LOOKING** AT THEM.



"AND HE LEAVES THEM...



"... IN THE MOST...

"... UNLIKELY PLACES."

AND THEN THERE WAS THE TIME WHEN --

TIME'S UP! THANK YOU. SAME TIME NEXT WEEK?

OH. AH, ACTUALLY, I WAS RATHER HOPING --

LISTEN, YOU'RE **FINE.** YOU HAVE A DANGEROUS OCCUPATION... IT'S PERFECTLY **NATURAL** THAT YOU SHOULD FEEL ANXIOUS NOW AND AGAIN.

NOW, IF YOU FEEL LIKE TALKING ABOUT YOUR **MOTHER** SOMETIME...

YES... YES, YOU'RE RIGHT! I'M THE **RED BARON,** FOR THE KAISER'S SAKE! IT'S TIME I GOT OVER THIS IRRATIONAL DREAD OF A SILLY LITTLE DOG! **THANK YOU!**

YOU'RE WELCOME! NOW GET OUT THERE AND **SHOOT DOWN SOME TOMMIES!**

HIATER

T

PELT

DOCTOR VAN PELT TALKS **GOOD SENSE!** WHY, I FEEL BETTER ALREADY! ... AND ONCE I GET UP IN THE **SKY...**

...ALL MY TROUBLES...

...WILL BE FAR...

...BELOW...?

AAAUGHHH!

...AND THEN... H-HIS **SHADOW**!... MY **BLOOD** RAN COLD...

YOUR MOTHER... WAS SHE... A **TALL** WOMAN...?

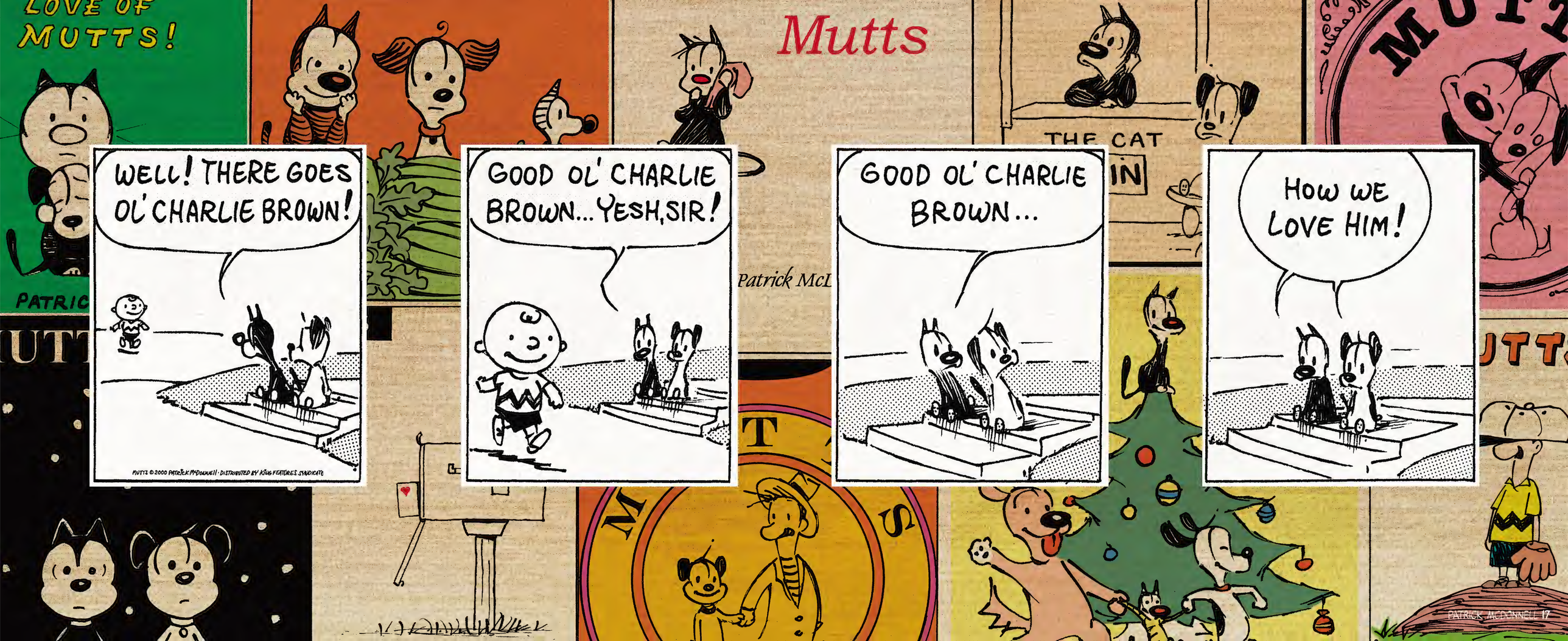
DER PSYCHIATER IST IN

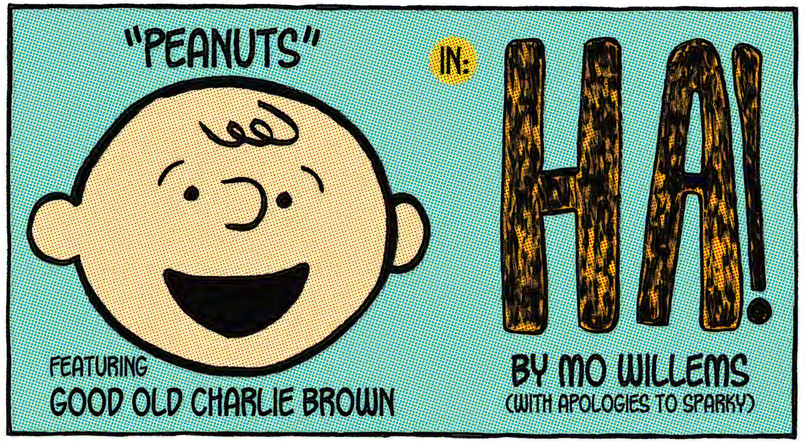
Dr. VAN PELT

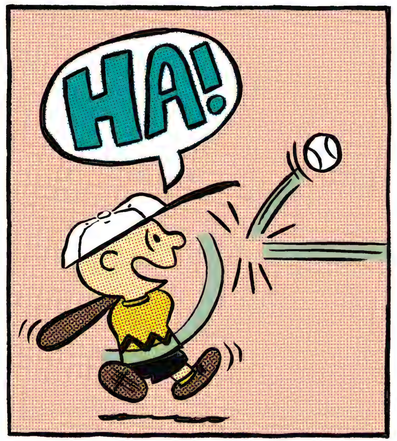
END

BOWL!

AAUGH!


LOVE OF MUTTS!
Mutts
Patrick McL
THE CAT
IN
WELL! THERE GOES OL' CHARLIE BROWN!
MUTTS © 2000 PATRICK MCDONNELL · DISTRIBUTED BY KING FEATURES SYNDICATE
GOOD OL' CHARLIE BROWN... YESH, SIR!
GOOD OL' CHARLIE BROWN...
HOW WE LOVE HIM!
PATRICK MCDONNELL 17





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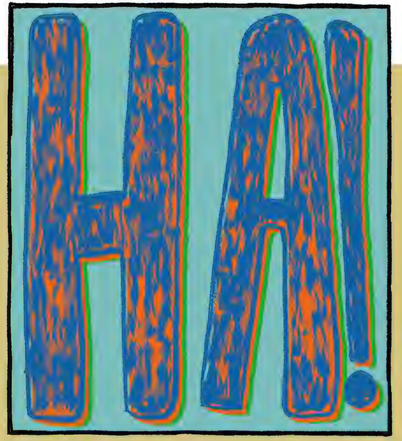
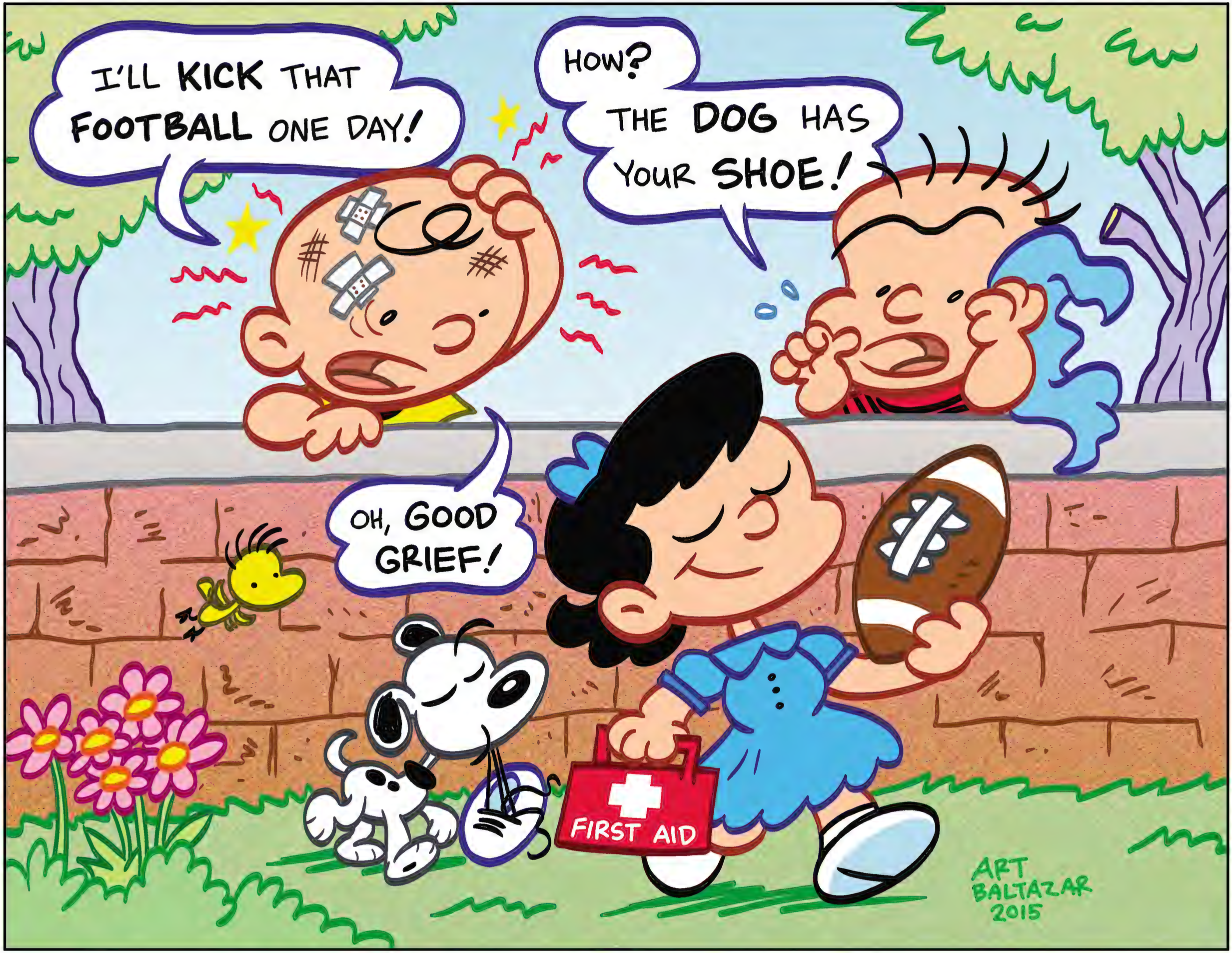



I'LL KICK THAT FOOTBALL ONE DAY!
HOW? THE DOG HAS YOUR SHOE!
OH, GOOD GRIEF!
FIRST AID
ART BALTAZAR 2015

ESCAPADE IN TOKYO

RATS!

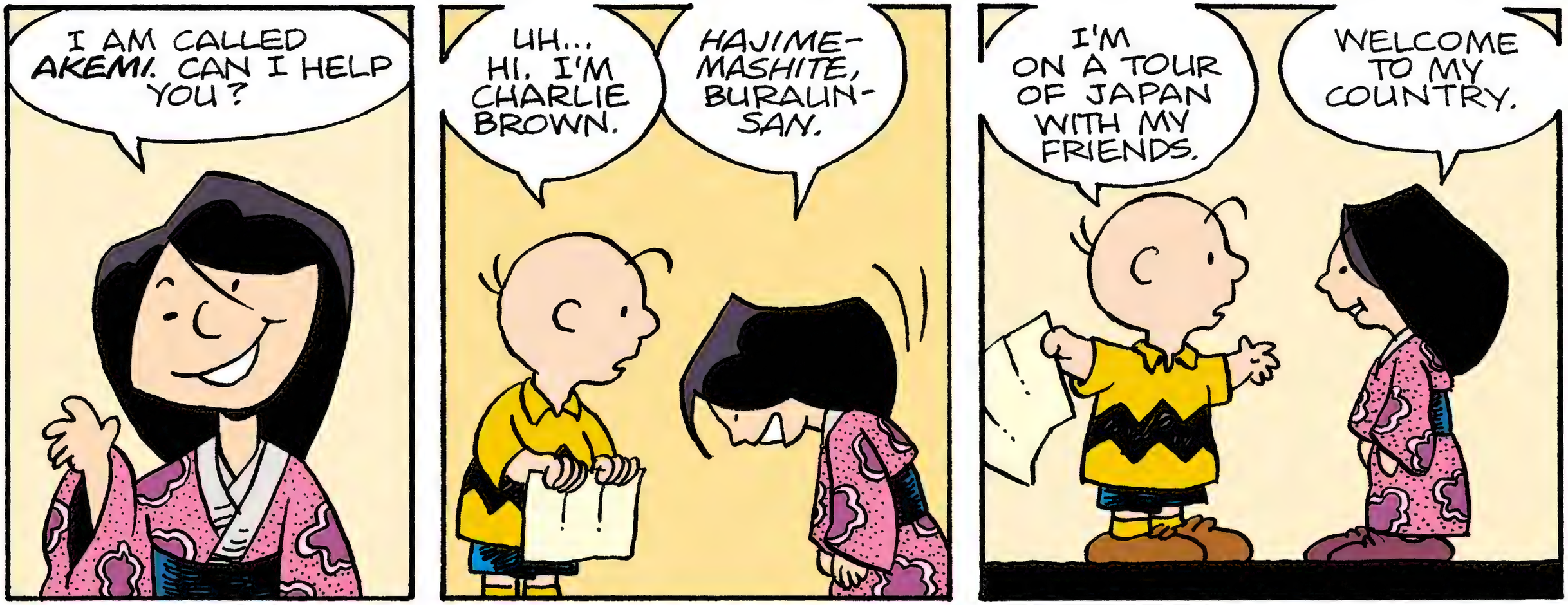
by
STAN SAKAI
and
Julie Fujii

AAUGH! OUR FIRST DAY IN TOKYO AND I'M SEPARATED FROM THE TOUR GROUP!

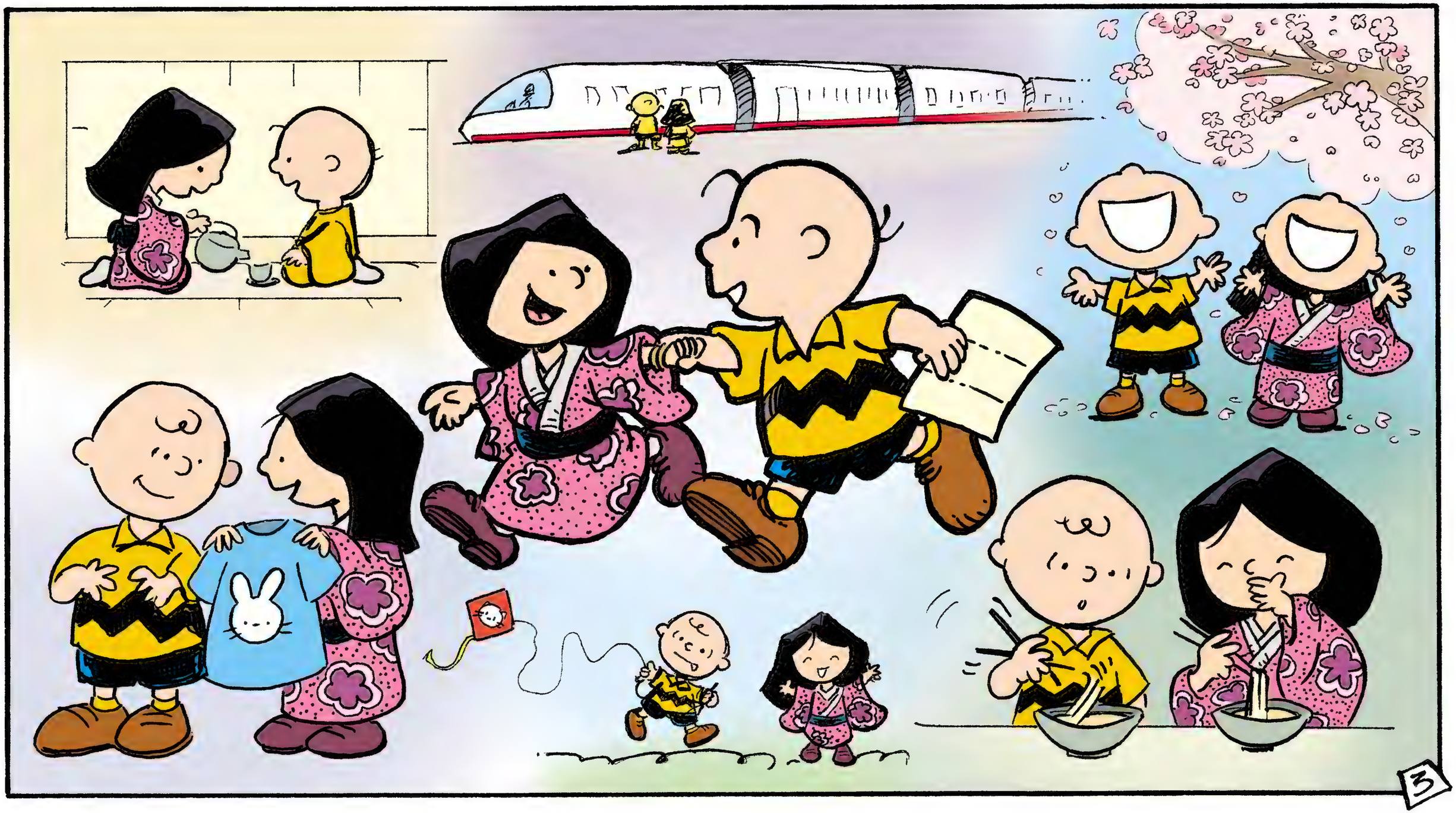
WELL, I'M STILL AT THE HOTEL SO I'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT FOR EVERYBODY TO GET BACK.

EXCUSE ME...

1


I AM CALLED AKEMI. CAN I HELP YOU?
UH... HI. I'M CHARLIE BROWN.
HAJIME-MASHITE, BURAUN-SAN.
I'M ON A TOUR OF JAPAN WITH MY FRIENDS.
WELCOME TO MY COUNTRY.
BUT I WOKE UP LATE AND THEY LEFT WITHOUT ME!
JET LAG, I GUESS.
YOU HAVE THE ITINERARY. YOU CAN CATCH UP TO THEM!
YEAH, BUT...
COME ON! I'LL HELP YOU!
BUT...
BUT...
BUT...
2

THE FIRST STOP ON THE LIST IS THE MEIJI SHRINE.
THEY'RE NOT HERE!
WHAT'S NEXT?


3

I AM SORRY WE NEVER CAUGHT UP TO YOUR FRIENDS.

I STILL HAD A GOOD TIME, AKEMI-CHAN.

I DID TOO, BURAUN-KUN!

HERE IS YOUR HOTEL. THANK YOU FOR A WONDERFUL DAY!

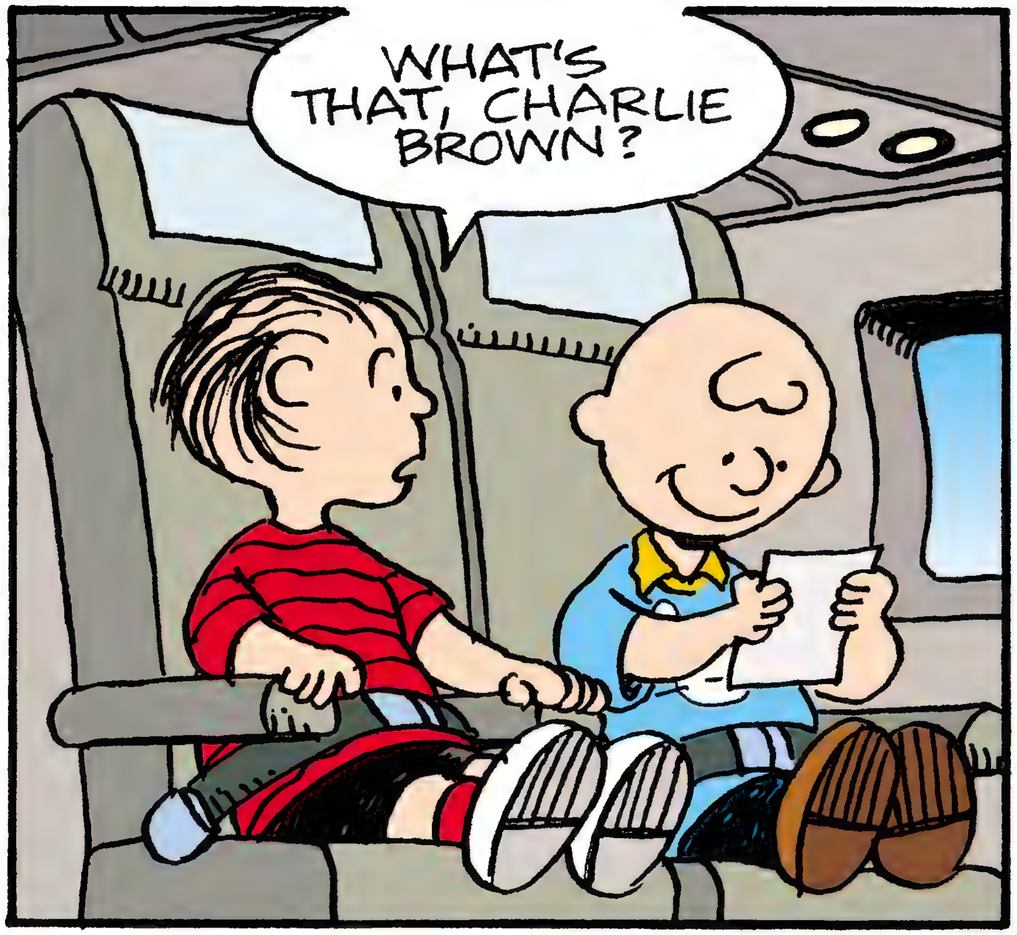
DOMO ARI-GATO!

THERE YOU ARE, YOU BLOCK-HEAD!

HUH?

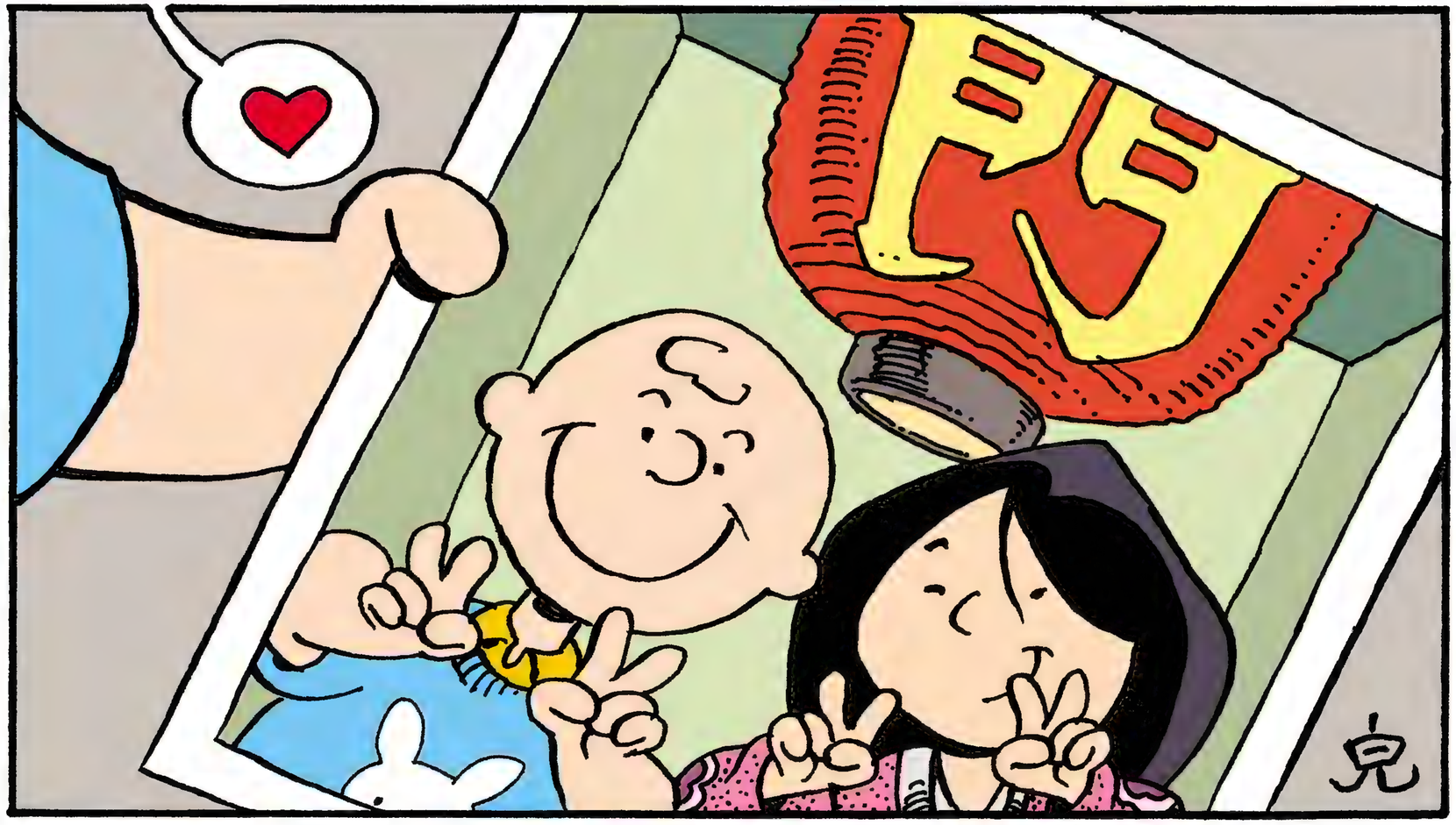
IT'S JUST LIKE YOU TO MISS THE TOUR! YOU MISSED OUT ON A *GREAT* DAY, CHARLIE BROWN!

4

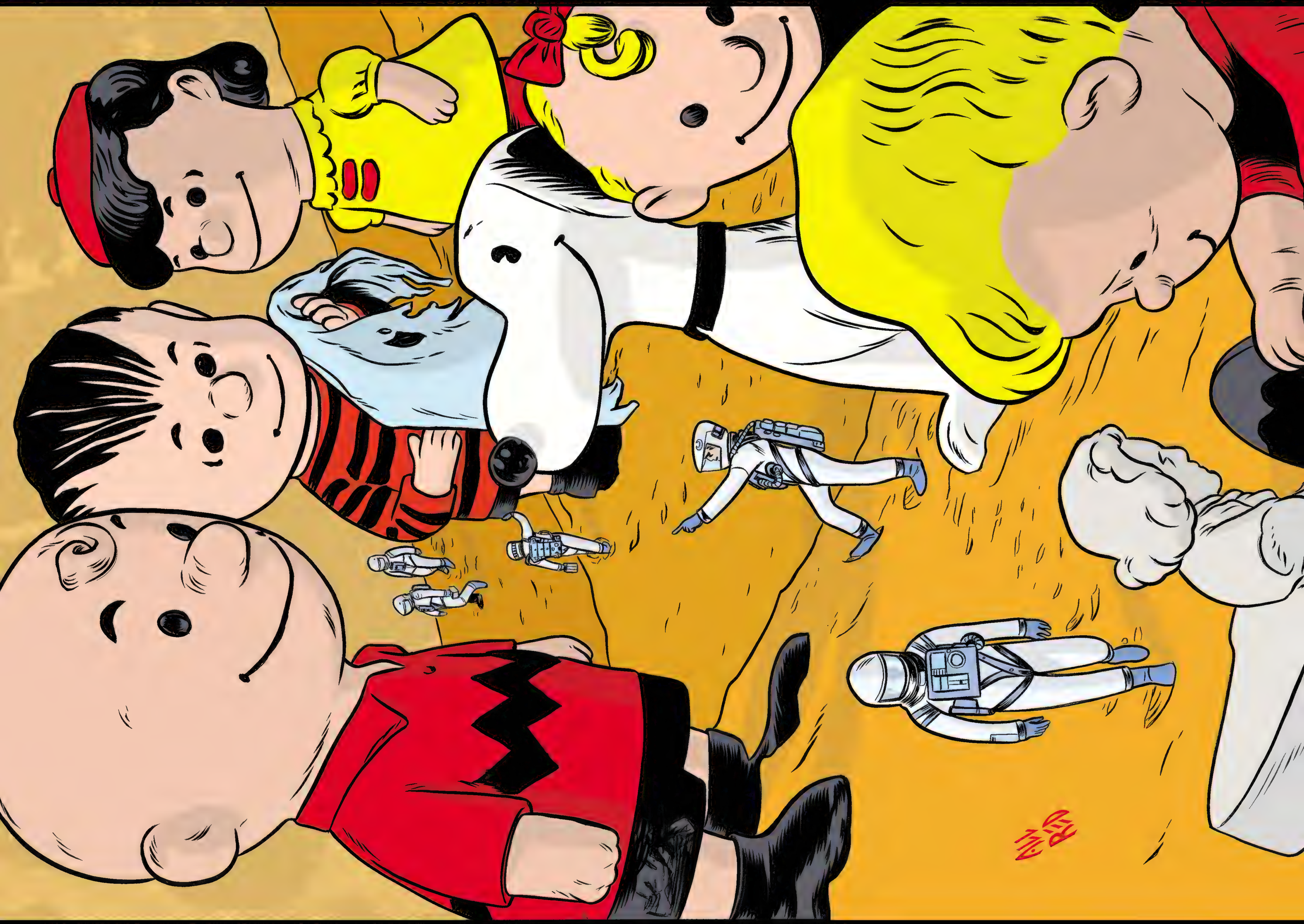

WHAT'S THAT, CHARLIE BROWN?

OH, IT'S A SOUVENIR OF TOKYO.

;SIGH!;



COOVER



PEANUTS
by
MOORE

WOW, THAT'S REALLY UP THERE.

SO, WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?

TUG!
TUG!

=SIGH=

WHAT'S YOUR OTHER PLAN?

I'M GOING TO GROW UP, GO TO COLLEGE SO I CAN GET A GOOD JOB...

AND MAKE ENOUGH MONEY TO BUY THIS TREE AND CUT IT DOWN.

OR... OR WE COULD TRY SOMETHING QUICKER —

YOU KICK THIS FOOTBALL INTO THE TREE AND KNOCK YOUR KITE FREE, RIGHT NOW.

YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS.

FEAR AND FORCE. THAT'S THE WAY TO HANDLE TREES, CHARLIE BROWN. FEAR AND FORCE.

I'M NOT FALLING FOR THAT OLD TRICK, LUCY. YOU'LL JUST PULL THE BALL AWAY AT THE LAST SECOND. I'VE ALREADY LOST MY KITE. I DON'T WANT TO LOSE MY SELF-RESPECT, TOO.

TUG! TUG!

I UNDERSTAND. BUT ASK YOURSELF THIS QUESTION... WHAT WOULD A WINNER DO?

WOULD A WINNER GIVE UP AND SPEND THE REST OF HIS LIFE HAUNTED BY REGRET? ALONE? COMPLETELY KITELESS?

OR, WOULD HE KICK THE FOOTBALL INTO THE TREE AND KNOCK THAT `OL KITE RIGHT DOWN INTO HIS HANDS? I ASK YOU, WHAT WOULD HE DO?!

WELL?

KICK THE BALL.

WHAT'S THAT? I CAN'T HEAR YOU.

OF COURSE HE WOULD! KICK! SMASH! VICTORY!

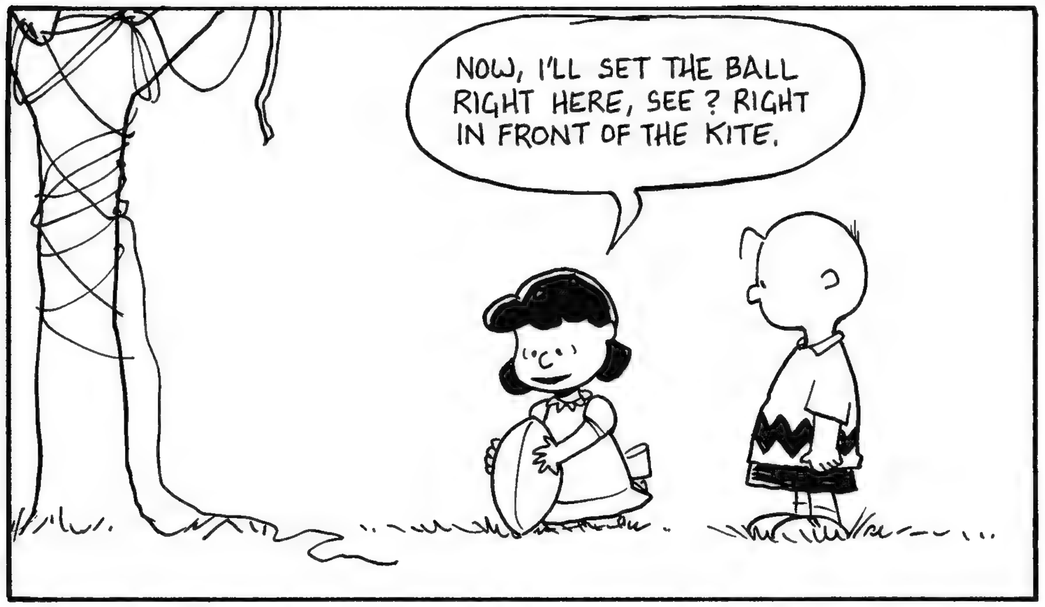
BUT YOU'LL...

THERE ARE NO BUTS IN WINNING, CHARLIE BROWN! ONLY W'S AND I'S AND N'S ...AND A G. NOW, ARE WE DOING THIS OR NOT?!

WHAT WOULD A WINNER DO?

KICK THE BALL!

YES!

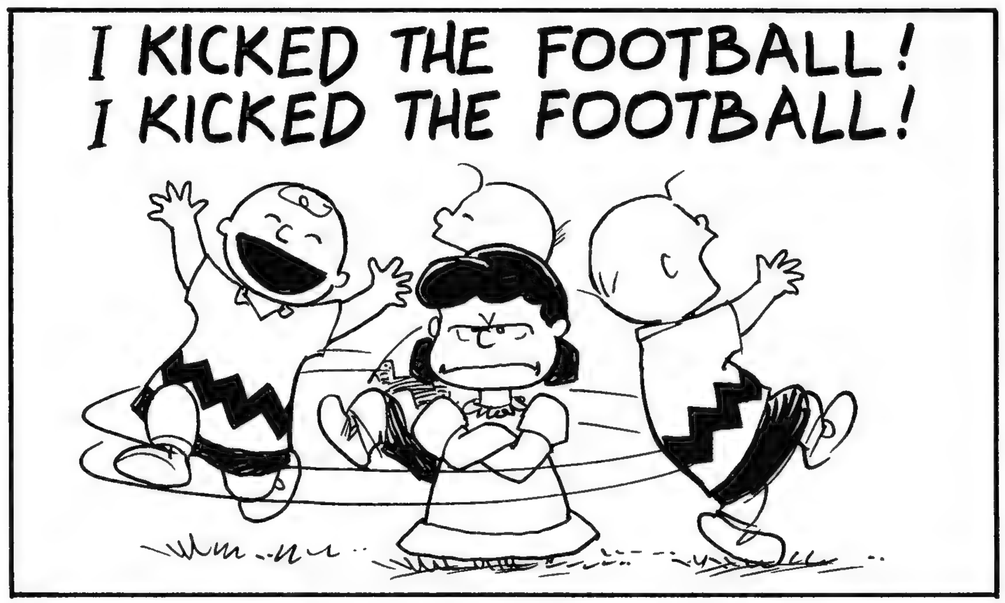

NOW, I'LL SET THE BALL RIGHT HERE, SEE? RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE KITE.

AND YOU GO WAY BACK THERE AND GET A RUNNING START...

KICK!
STEP!

HA!

I DID IT!

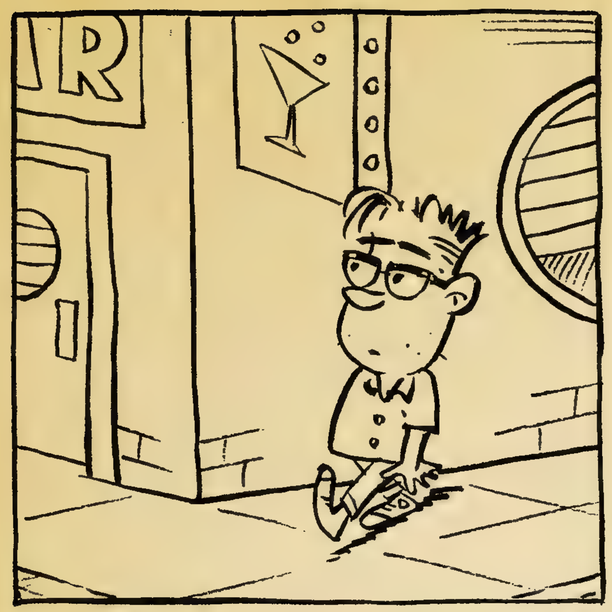

I KICKED THE FOOTBALL!
I KICKED THE FOOTBALL!

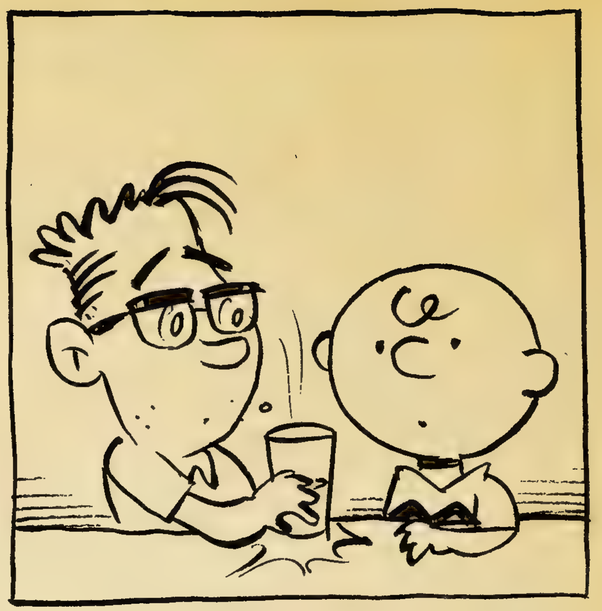
I DID IT, LUCY! I KICKED THE BALL BEFORE YOU COULD TRICK ME! I'M A WINNER! I'M A WINNER!

WINNERS DON'T LOSE THEIR KITE AND THEIR BALL IN THE SAME TREE, CHARLIE BROWN.

I WONDER IF MY SKATES ARE UP THERE?

dustin after Schulz 2015





CHARLIE BROWN? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

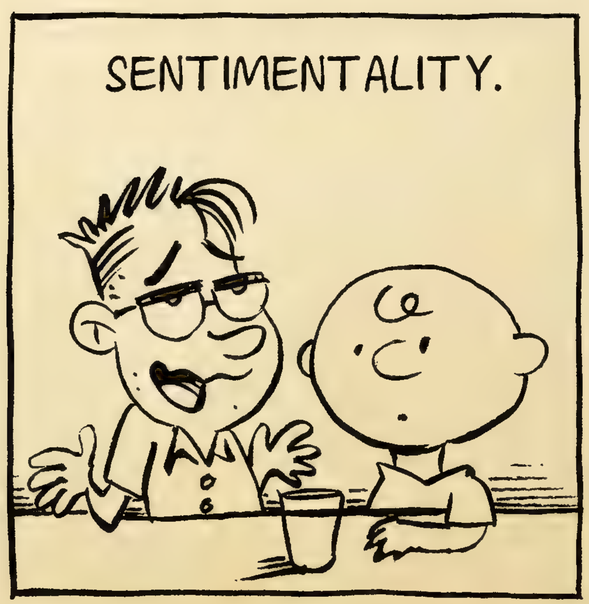
THIS IS INCREDIBLE! LET ME BUY YOU A ROOT BEER.

I'M A CARTOONIST. WE SURE MISS YOU.

YES SIR. COMICS TODAY. LET ME TELL YOU...

IF THEY'RE NOT FORMULAIC AND BLAND, THEY'RE MEAN-SPIRITED.

BUT YOU KNOW WHAT THEY LACK MORE THAN ANYTHING?


SENTIMENTALITY.

CHEERS!
CLINK!

LET ME TELL YOU A STORY ABOUT WHEN I WAS GROWING UP IN ENGLAND.

ONE DAY I FOUND A COOL BUTTON ON THE STREET. I THINK YOU CALL THEM 'PINS'.

MONTY PYTHON

THE NEXT DAY AT SCHOOL I WORE IT WITH PRIDE.

I LOVED IT BUT SOON TEMPTING OFFERS TO SWAP STARTED COMING IN.

NUDIE PEN

CLACKERS

PLASTIC ESSO MAN

POKER DICE (ONE MISSING)

BLAKEY'S SHOE PROTECTORS.

Cadbury's Marvellous Creation

CHOCOLATE

HEY! YOU LIKE CARTOONS. WANNA TRADE FOR THIS?

IT WAS A RATTY BEAT-UP 'PEANUTS' PAPERBACK. I DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TO THINK ABOUT IT.

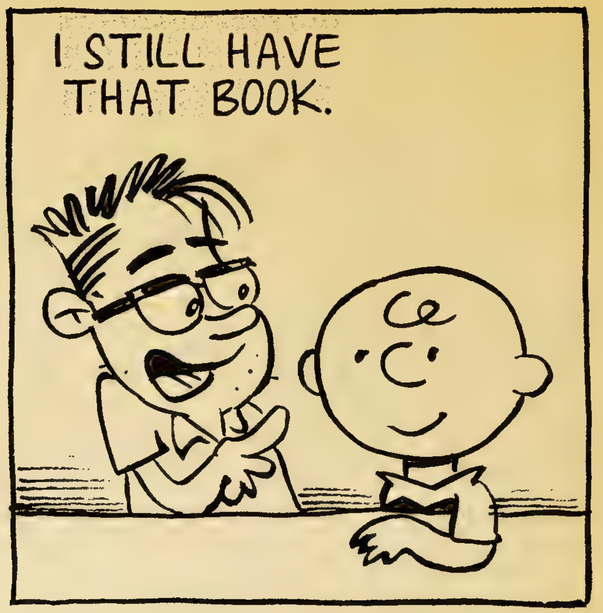
I SPENT MANY HAPPY HOURS WITH THAT BOOK. I MUST HAVE READ IT A THOUSAND TIMES.

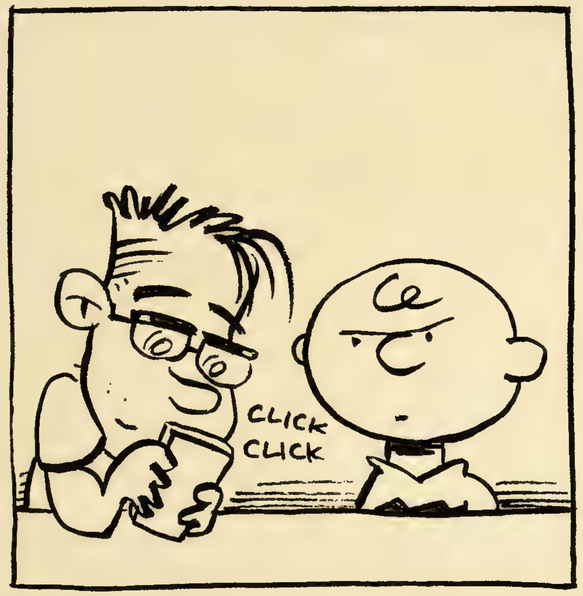
MY FAVORITE PART WAS A STORY ABOUT A BOOK REPORT YOU HAD TO DO ON 'GULLIVER'S TRAVELS'.

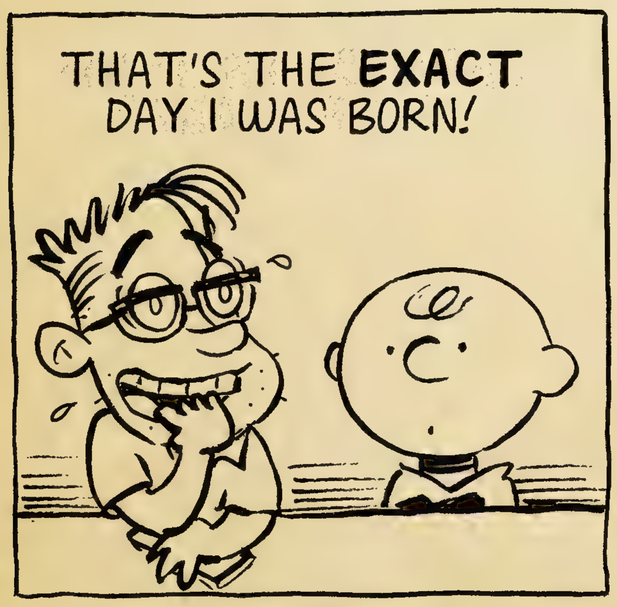
IT WAS A VACATION ASSIGNMENT AND YOU KEPT PUTTING IT OFF.

WHEN SCHOOL BEGAN, LINUS ASKED IF YOU'D FINISHED THE REPORT.

LOOKING TOTALLY FRAZZLED YOU SAID YOU'D FINISHED AT THREE O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING.







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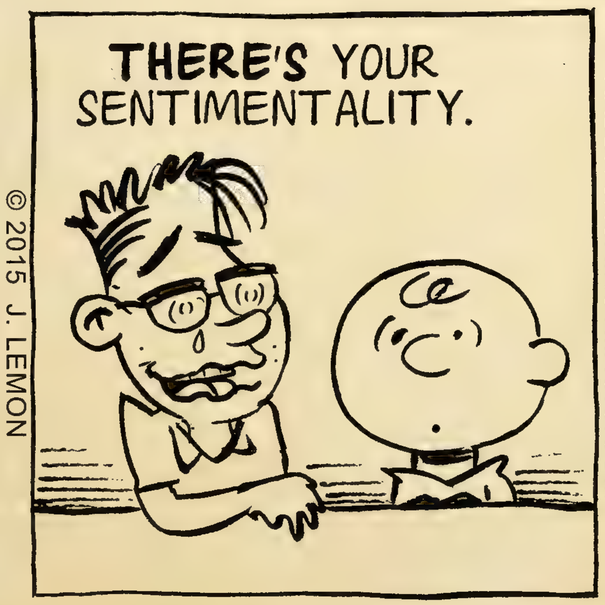
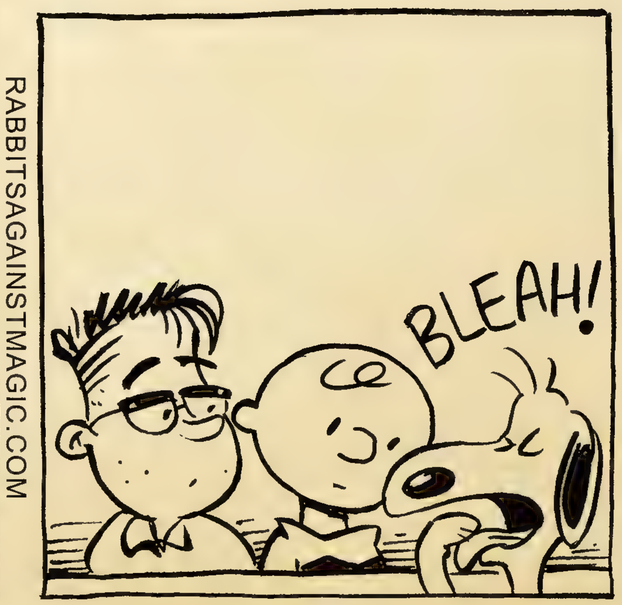


RABBITSAGAINSTMAGIC.COM



WAHWAHWAHWAHWAHWAHW
WAHWAHWAHWAHWAHWAHW
AHWAHWAHWAHWAHWAHW
AHWAHWAHWAHWAHWAHW
A

A COMICAL LIFE

BY CHYNNA CLUGSTON FLORES

CHARLES SCHULZ'S **PEANUTS COMICS** HAVE BEEN A PART OF MY LIFE SINCE I CAN REMEMBER.

IN FACT, THEY'VE INFILTRATED SO MANY ASPECTS OF MY LIFE OVER THE YEARS, RIGHT DOWN TO MY MORNING MUG OF TEA, THAT I GENUINELY CAN'T IMAGINE A WORLD WITHOUT THESE CHARACTERS BEING IN IT.

FOR EXAMPLE, IF I DON'T GET TO WATCH **"IT'S THE GREAT PUMPKIN, CHARLIE BROWN,"** EVERY SINGLE HALLOWEEN, I PRETTY MUCH LOSE MY MIND. IT MAKES THE HOLIDAY COMPLETE AT OUR HOUSE.

WOO! IT'S OFFICIALLY HALLOWE'EN!

I GOT A ROCK.

Violet

MR. DARCY

LiL' Luna

CHARLIE BROWN WAS MY FIRST CARTOON CRUSH.

LIKE, AS A KID I EVEN HAD A STUPID DREAM WHERE I MADE OUT WITH HIM.

HE WASN'T MY LAST CARTOON CRUSH, EITHER, SO FEEL FREE TO JUDGE AWAY. PERSONALLY I'VE ALWAYS LOVED CARTOONS, BUT WHEN YOU'RE A KID, YOU CAN **LOVE** CARTOONS.

MAINLY BECAUSE YOU HAVE THE ABILITY TO IMAGINE THEM AS REAL ENTITIES THAT ARE WORTHY OF CRUSHES. BORING OL' **LOGIC** HASN'T SET IN YET.

SIGH

I THINK MY CRUSH ON CHARLIE HAD TO DO WITH HIS BEING AN OUTSIDER, AN UNDERDOG. I GUESS I'M JUST ATTRACTED TO MY OWN KIND OF MISFIT. ESPECIALLY IF THEY ROCK COOL SHIRTS.

SNIFF

WASHA

NOT THAT CHARLIE EVER CHANGED HIS. SOMEONE NEEDS TO TALK TO THAT DUDE ABOUT HYGIENE. (A NOT UNCOMMON PROBLEM AMONG CARTOON CHARACTERS. I'D HATE TO HAVE TO PERSONALLY WASH ANY OF THEIR UNDERWEAR.)

IT AMUSES ME THAT THERE ARE EVEN PEOPLE IN MY LIFE I'VE OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH OTHER PEANUTS CHARACTERS. THERE'S BEEN A FEW.

MY **GRANDMOTHER BETH,** FOR ONE. A HUGE INFLUENCE ON ME HERSELF. SHE WAS THE ONE WHO GOT ME INTO SCHULZ'S COMICS. SHE WAS AN AVID READER, MOSTLY SCIENCE FICTION, BUT SHE HAD A FEW MASS MARKET COLLECTIONS OF COMIC STRIPS ON HER SHELVES, WHICH NATURALLY I WAS ATTRACTED TO AS A SMALL CHILD. I'D POUR OVER THEM FOR HOURS.

I'M NOT SURE HOW SHE BECAME A PEANUTS FAN, MAYBE THROUGH WORKING FOR THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER, WHICH SHE STARTED AT IN THE EARLY FIFTIES. EITHER WAY SHE WAS SOMETIMES CALLED **LUCY** BY HER COWORKERS IN THE ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT OF THE FRESNO BEE. IT WAS NO MYSTERY WHY.

SHE WAS WONDERFUL, BUT I WOULDN'T WANT TO EVER BE ON HER BAD SIDE WHEN SHE WAS IN A FOUL MOOD. BEYOND THE DARK HAIR, I COULD WELL IMAGINE THE SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE TWO .

THEN THERE'S MY **HUSBAND** WHO REMINDS ME OF **SNOOPY,** WITH A TALENT FOR MOCKERY, GENERAL INVENTIVENESS, AND ADVENTURER'S SPIRIT. HE'S PARTICULARLY A FAN OF SNOOPY AS THE **WWI FLYING ACE** AND **THE VULTURE.**

CONSIDERING MY EARLIER CRUSH, I GUESS IT'S PRETTY NATURAL THAT I'D HAVE MARRIED SOMEONE WHO I ASSOCIATED WITH A MAJOR PEANUTS CHARACTER.

AS FOR THE OTHERS, THERE'S **BECCA,** WHO REMINDS ME OF **WOODSTOCK** WITH HER HAPHAZARD WALKING PATTERNS AND CHEERFUL, SPIRITED CHATTER.

(I'VE PULLED HER OUT OF TRAFFIC MORE THAN ONCE.)

THERE'S **JAMIE,** A WRITER AND EDITOR, WHO IS UNIVERSALLY AGREED UPON AS BEING **SCHROEDER** INCARNATE.

WILL YOU WRITE ME SOMETHING COOL TO DRAW?

WILL YOU GO **AWAY** ALREADY? YOU'RE DENTING MY SMITH-CORONA SKYRITER.

THE SMITHS

COMICS

COMICS

SAUSAGE CARTS

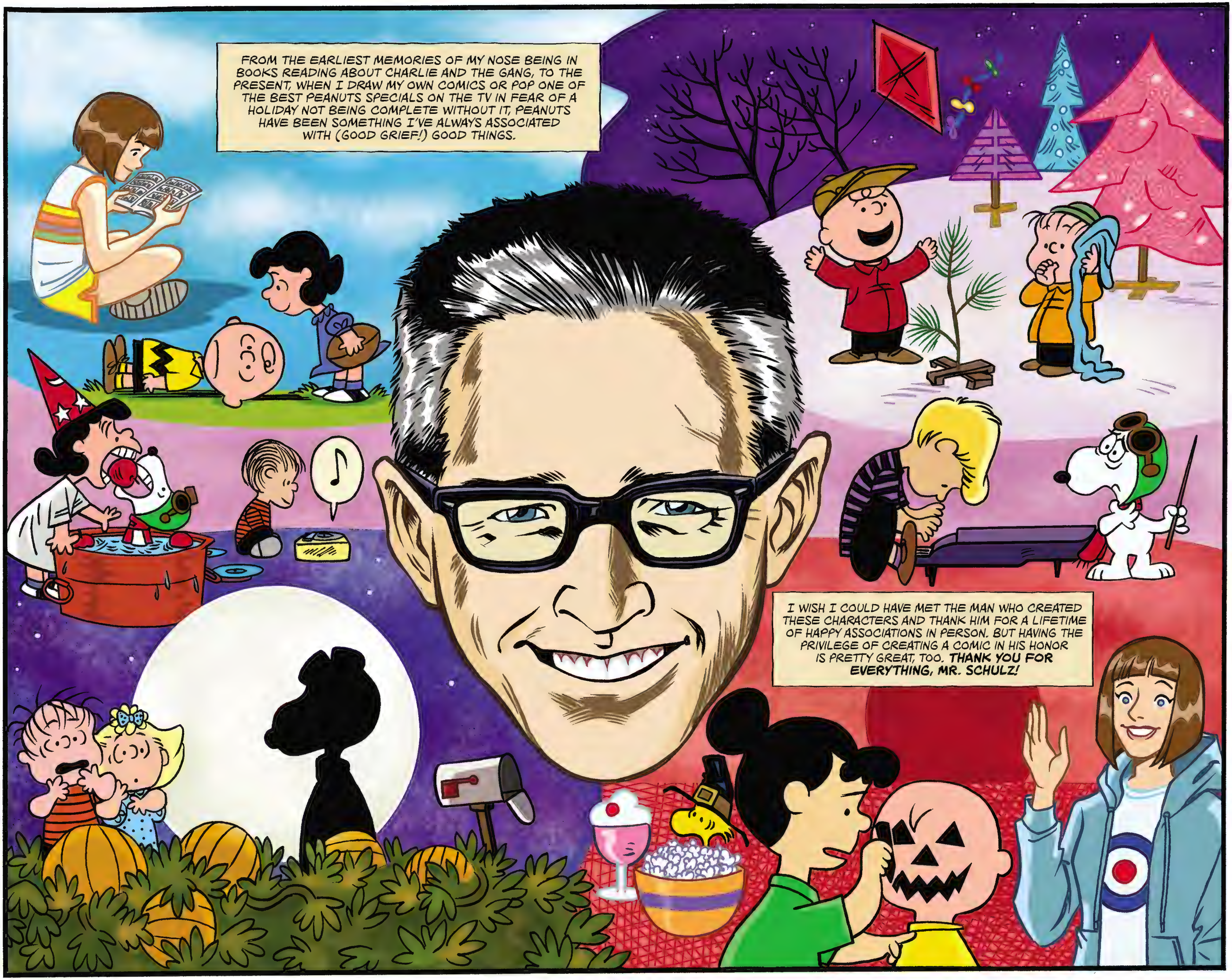
BAM BAM BAM AAUGH!

OF COURSE THERE'S **IAN,** MY BUDDY WHO IS NOT UNLIKE **CHARLIE BROWN** WITH HIS LEGENDARY CLUMSINESS. IAN IS A LIVING, BREATHING **CARTOON.**

I'VE EVEN BEEN ACCUSED OF BEING **SALLY,** WITH HOW GOOFY I GET OVER THE THINGS I LIKE. THE OBSESSIVENESS, THE EXCESSIVE ENTHUSIASM FOR WHATEVER STRIKES ME THAT DAY. YOU KNOW, WITH LITTLE HEARTS POPPING AROUND MY HEAD LIKE WHEN SALLY IS MOONING OVER LINUS, ET CETERA. IT'S NOT... **INACCURATE.**

BESIDES MY ASSOCIATING SCHULZ'S CHARACTERS WITH PEOPLE IN MY LIFE, PEANUTS ALSO INFLUENCED MY OWN COMICS, AND HOW I'VE APPROACHED VISUAL STORYTELLING AND GAGS.

SCHULZ'S COMEDIC TIMING AND USE OF SLAPSTICK IN 2D IN HIS PANELS ARE SOMETHING THAT I STUDIED VERY CAREFULLY, WHICH I HOPE IS EVIDENT AND TRANSLATES IN MY WORK TODAY. I OWE A LOT TO PEANUTS IN THAT RESPECT AS WELL.


FROM THE EARLIEST MEMORIES OF MY NOSE BEING IN BOOKS READING ABOUT CHARLIE AND THE GANG, TO THE PRESENT, WHEN I DRAW MY OWN COMICS OR POP ONE OF THE BEST PEANUTS SPECIALS ON THE TV IN FEAR OF A HOLIDAY NOT BEING COMPLETE WITHOUT IT, PEANUTS HAVE BEEN SOMETHING I'VE ALWAYS ASSOCIATED WITH (GOOD GRIEF!) GOOD THINGS.
I WISH I COULD HAVE MET THE MAN WHO CREATED THESE CHARACTERS AND THANK HIM FOR A LIFETIME OF HAPPY ASSOCIATIONS IN PERSON. BUT HAVING THE PRIVILEGE OF CREATING A COMIC IN HIS HONOR IS PRETTY GREAT, TOO. THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING, MR. SCHULZ!

JW/2015

IT'S THE **DAWN PATROL!** WE'RE OFF TO HUNT THE **RED BARON.**

I CROSS OVER ENEMY LINES... I CAN SEE THE NETWORK OF TRENCHES BELOW.

SUDDENLY, A **FOKKER TRIPLANE** APPEARS OUT OF THE CLOUDS...

THE **RED BARON.**

DIVING DOWN OUT OF THE SUN, ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE EXPLODING ALL AROUND ME, I CATCH HIM IN MY SIGHTS. I—

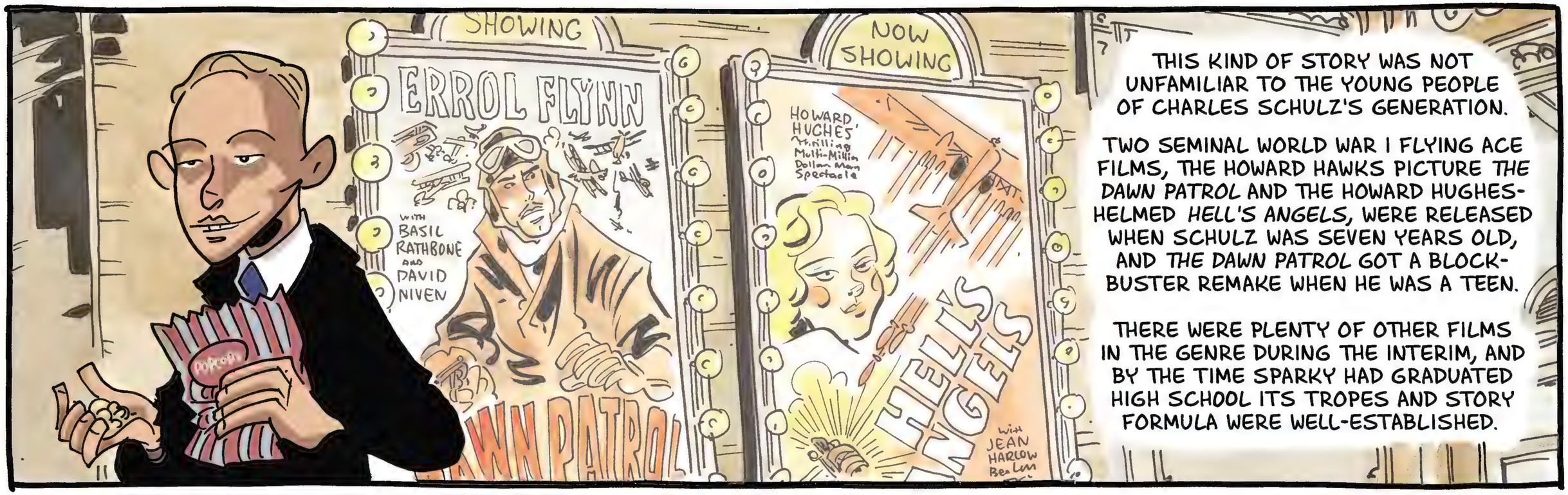
!

AAUGH! THERE HE IS ON MY TAIL!

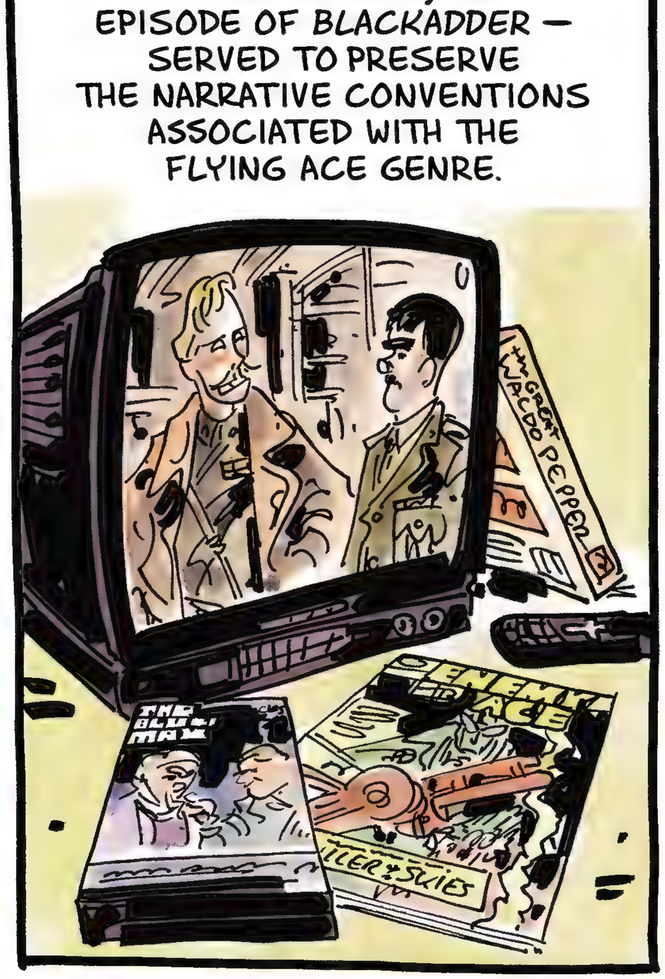
HE'S TRICKED ME AGAIN!

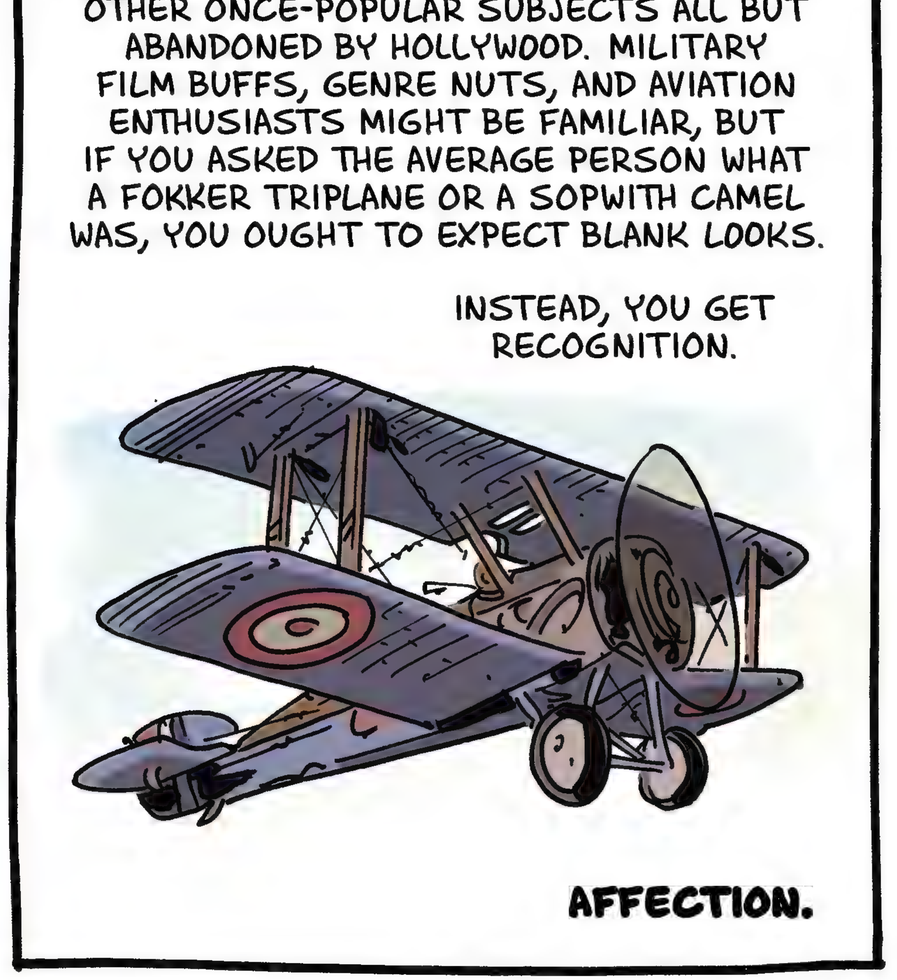
MY ENGINE'S ON FIRE! I'M GOING DOWN BEHIND ENEMY LINES!

CURSE YOU, RED BARON!


SHOWING
ERROL FLYNN
WITH BASIL RATHBONE AND DAVID NIVEN
DAWN PATROL
NOW SHOWING
HOWARD HUGHES' Thrilling Multi-Million Dollar Man Spectacle
HELL'S ANGELS
WITH JEAN HARLOW
THIS KIND OF STORY WAS NOT UNFAMILIAR TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF CHARLES SCHULZ'S GENERATION.
TWO SEMINAL WORLD WAR I FLYING ACE FILMS, THE HOWARD HAWKS PICTURE THE DAWN PATROL AND THE HOWARD HUGHES-HELMED HELL'S ANGELS, WERE RELEASED WHEN SCHULZ WAS SEVEN YEARS OLD, AND THE DAWN PATROL GOT A BLOCK-BUSTER REMAKE WHEN HE WAS A TEEN.
THERE WERE PLENTY OF OTHER FILMS IN THE GENRE DURING THE INTERIM, AND BY THE TIME SPARKY HAD GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL ITS TROPES AND STORY FORMULA WERE WELL-ESTABLISHED.

ONCE WORLD WAR II ROLLED AROUND, HOWEVER, THE ROMANTIC TAKE ON WAR PRESENTED THROUGH THE LENS OF THE ACES OF THE WAR THAT PRECEDED IT BECAME UNFASHIONABLE.


ONLY A HANDFUL OF EXAMPLES — A FEW MOVIES, A FEW COMICS, AN EPISODE OF BLACKADDER — SERVED TO PRESERVE THE NARRATIVE CONVENTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE FLYING ACE GENRE.
THE BLUE MAX
ENEMY ACE
SKIES


BY ALL LOGIC, THOSE CONVENTIONS SHOULD HAVE BEEN LOST TO TIME, LIKE OTHER ONCE-POPULAR SUBJECTS ALL BUT ABANDONED BY HOLLYWOOD. MILITARY FILM BUFFS, GENRE NUTS, AND AVIATION ENTHUSIASTS MIGHT BE FAMILIAR, BUT IF YOU ASKED THE AVERAGE PERSON WHAT A FOKKER TRIPLANE OR A SOPWITH CAMEL WAS, YOU OUGHT TO EXPECT BLANK LOOKS.
INSTEAD, YOU GET RECOGNITION.
AFFECTION.

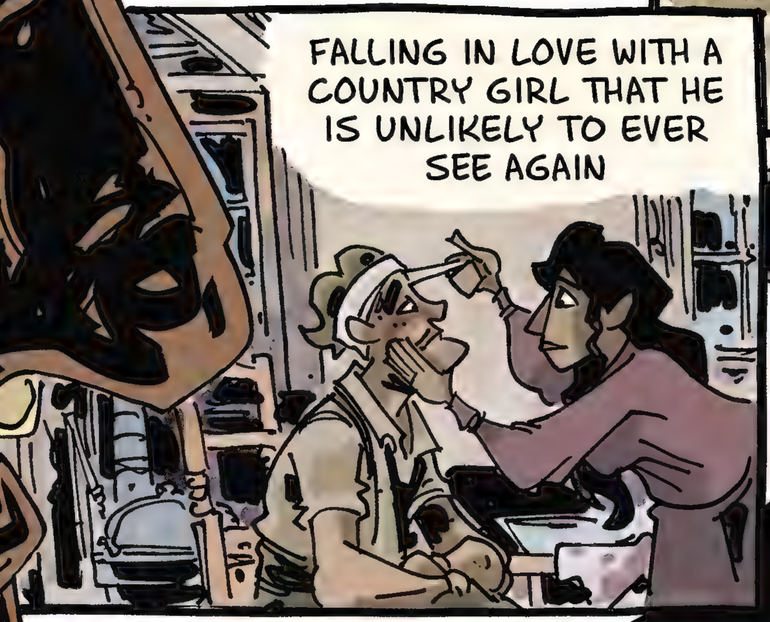
NOT ONLY DO MOST PEOPLE RECOGNIZE THE TERMINOLOGY, BUT THEY'RE FAMILIAR WITH THE ELEMENTS OF THE GENRE:

THE DASHING, HANDSOME, CHIVALRIC FLYING ACE

DRINKING IN THE OFFICERS' CLUB, HAUNTED BY THE DEATH OF HIS COMRADES **AND** BY THE DEATH OF NOBLE ENEMIES AT HIS HAND

MAKING HIS WAY ACROSS ENEMY LINES AFTER BEING SHOT DOWN OR FORCED TO LAND, SOMETIMES AFTER HAVING ESCAPED FROM A MILITARY PRISON

FALLING IN LOVE WITH A COUNTRY GIRL THAT HE IS UNLIKELY TO EVER SEE AGAIN



AND, OF COURSE, THE **RED BARON.**

LATER GENERATIONS BECAME ACQUAINTED WITH THESE TROPES, BUT **NOT** THROUGH THE WWI GENRE ADVENTURES, AS SCHULZ AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES HAD DONE.

LATER GENERATIONS LEARNED THEM THROUGH **SNOOPY.**

HE WORLD WARI PILOT IS "SOPWITH CAMEL"...

TODAY I'M FLYING OVER BELGIUM...I CAN SEE AN ARMY CONVOY BELOW...

BUT I MUST [illegible] RED BARON, AND BRING HIM DOWN

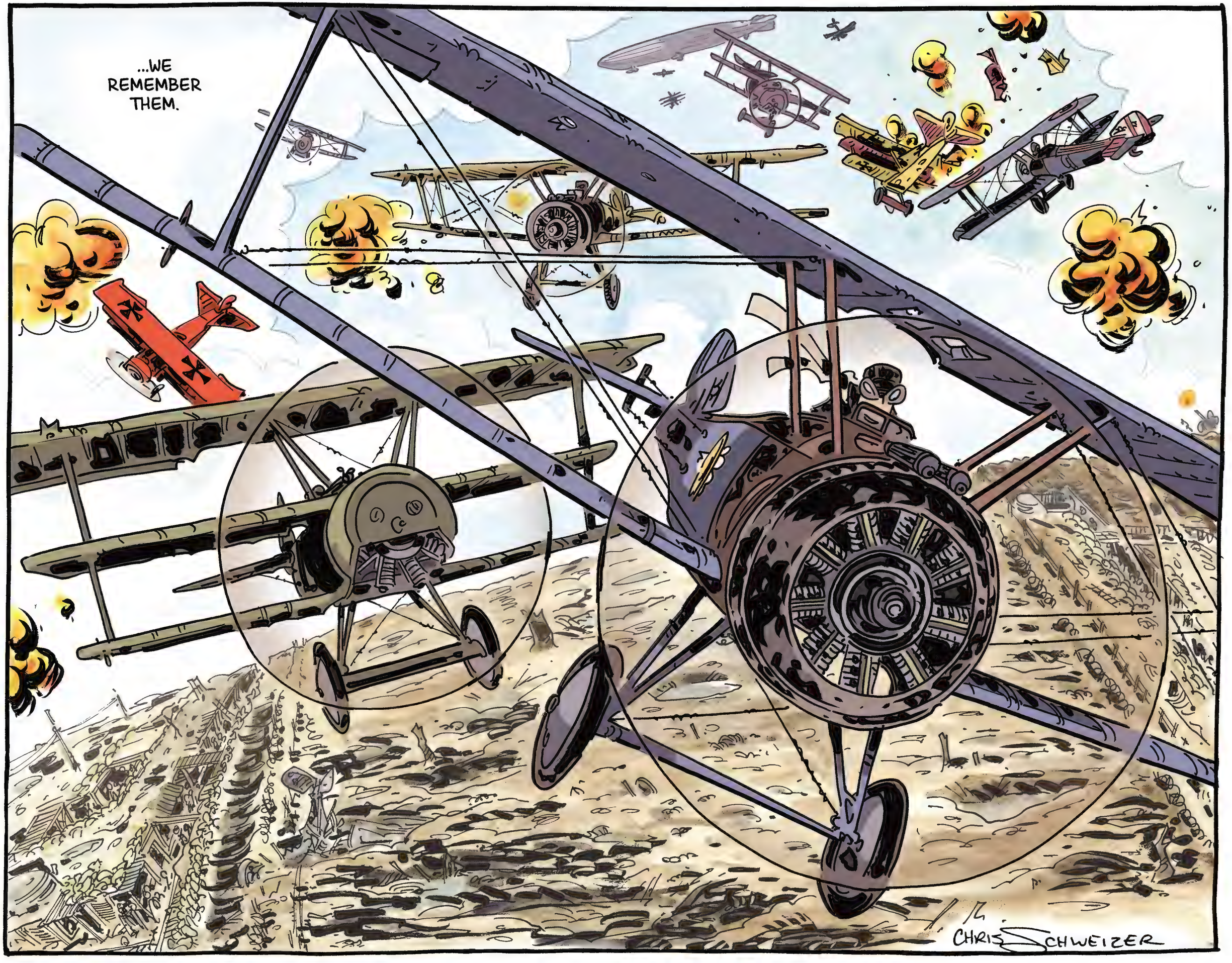
THIS IS TRULY REMARKABLE.

THAT THE PUBLIC WOULD KNOW THE CONVENTIONS OF A GENRE WITHOUT HAVING EVER SEEN OR READ AN EXAMPLE OF IT IS ONE OF THE MOST TELLING PROOFS OF THE CULTURAL IMPACT OF PEANUTS.

THIS GENRE, THESE STORIES, THEY WERE BORNE OF THE EXPLOITS OF REAL MEN.

A **CENTURY** HAS PASSED SINCE THE FIRST FLYING ACES TOOK TO THE SKIES.

THANKS TO **PEANUTS...**


...WE REMEMBER THEM.
CHRIS SCHWEIZER

PEANUTS

A TRIBUTE BY

FRANK CAMMUSO

THE WORLD WAR 1 FLYING ACE HAS BEEN SHOT DOWN BEHIND ENEMY LINES.

I MUST FIND A WAY BACK TO THE FRONT, BUT HOW?

AH-HA! JUST WHAT I NEED! BUT WAIT? IT'S GUARDED BY ONE OF THE KAISER'S MEN.

IF I HOPE TO ESCAPE, I MUST CREATE A DISTRACTION.

DING DONG

HELLO?

SEEING HIS CHANCE, HE SPRINGS INTO ACTION!

CHARLIE BROWN, CAN YOU COME GET YOUR DOG?

THE PILOT FLIES HOME AFTER STEALING THE HIGH PERFORMANCE GERMAN INSTRUMENT.

THE WWI FLYING ACE IS IN TROUBLE!

LOW ON FUEL, AND DEEP IN ENEMY TERRITORY!

HE MUST MAKE AN EMERGENCY FUEL STOP, BUT WHERE TO LAND?

SUDDENLY, HE SPOTS IT!

AN ENEMY FUEL DEPOT, WITH JUST ONE GUARD ON DUTY!

HE QUICKLY LANDS HIS SOPWITH CAMEL...

AND LEAPS INTO ACTION!

AAUGH

PIZZA

CHEW CHEW

CHEW CHEW CHEW

AND HE'S BACK IN THE AIR!

HEY!

You Made a MISTAKE, Charlie Brown!

by Megan Brennan

It's too quiet outside, what's that dog up to this time?

yum!

SNOOPY

Dinnertime, Snoopy!

SIGH! I just wish he'd act like a regular dog sometimes!

SNOOPY!?

Meow

OH NO!

Was Snoopy turned into a cat to punish me for always complaining about him??

What kind of universe lets a thing like this just happen because a kid complains too much!

I'm so sorry pal!!!!

Yawn

I somehow completely changed your earthly form, and why? Just because I was sick of you pretending to be a fighter pilot or a cool kid at school? Is it YOUR fault that nobody seemed to care if a dog enrolled in grade school?

No! This is all MY fault!

Well Charlie Brown, in my professional opinion, you've really done it this time.

LICK

I'll never forgive myself! I'll live all my days atoning for this! Poor Snoopy!

SNOO

This is life now. I have a CAT.

turn

SMACK

?

Pat pat

SNOOPY!

MUNCH MUNCH

SNOOPY

SOB SOB

munch MUNCH

SNOO

Huh. So it's just a stray cat after all.

Hisss

AUGH! I was just trying to pet it!

You know, You finally did something right for once, Charlie Brown: you found this perfect cat!

Purr

The end

CHARLIE BROWWWN♫
OH, good grief... NOT again!!

Look WHAT I have... JUST for yoooo!!
You cannot be serious, Lucy Van Pelt!!

Do you honestly think I'm going to fall for your football gag again?
You're clearly mistaken!!

I may not be the **brightest** bulb in the shed...

...but I'm definitely **not** the **dimmest!!**

But Charlie Brown, **look!!**

KICK STARTER

A kickstarter campaign?!!

I made my goal, so I **have** to let somebody kick my football!! It may as well be **YOU!!**

LUCILLE VAN PELT'S KICKSTARTER CAMPAIGN

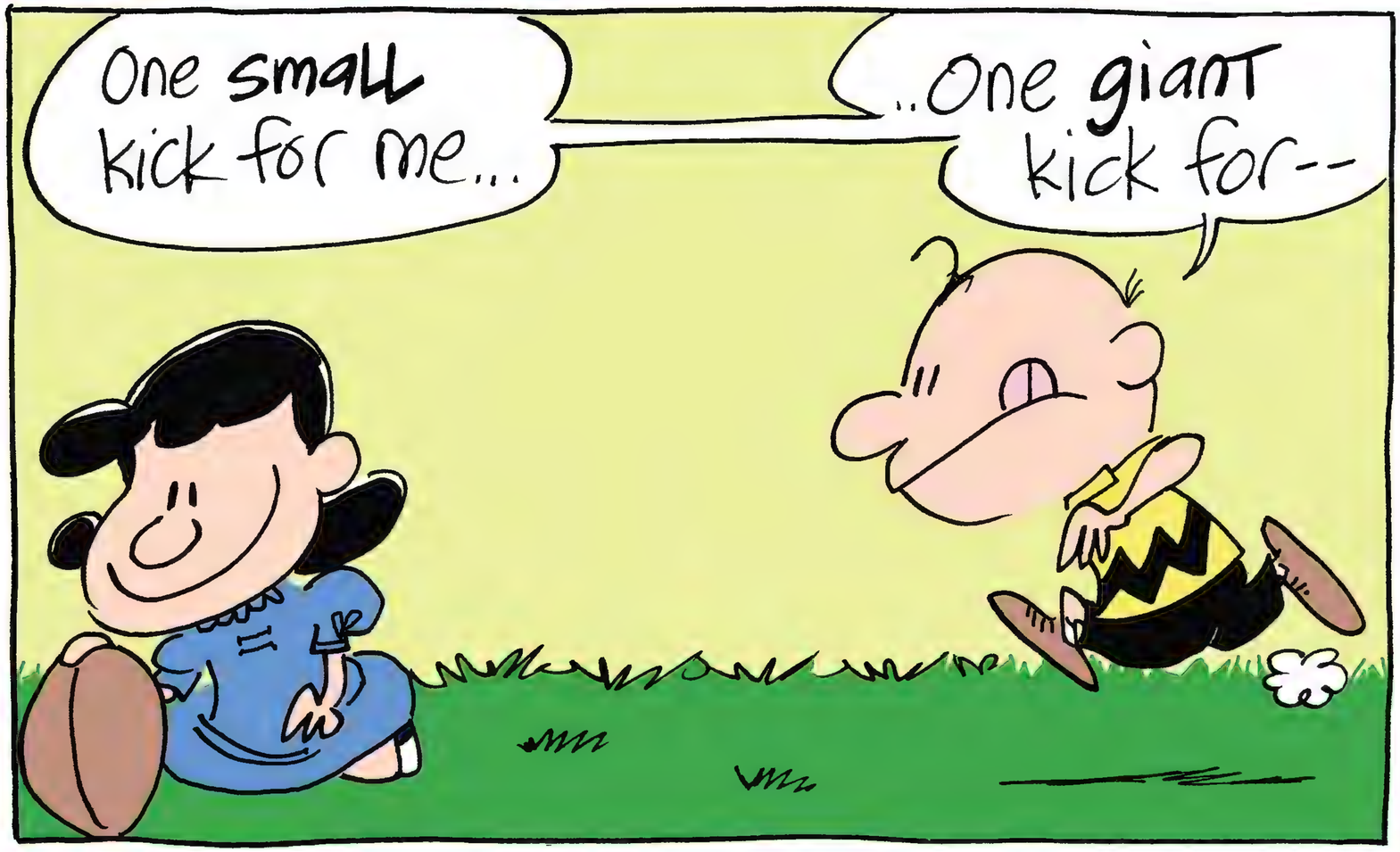
5¢

12,030

Really, Lucy? You'd chose **me** to kick your football? That's very kind of you!!

I guess I had Lucy all wrong!! Only a real fussbudget would flake on delivering their project!!

I'm gonna kick THIS football TO THE MOON!!


One small kick for me...
..one giant kick for--

AUGH!
WHIFF

Y'know what?

This time I'm gonna **take advantage** of the **view!!**

I notice **Snoopy** is **kicking** my **door**, demanding to be **fed!!**

And that **little red haired girl** is hanging out with Franklin...

=SIGH=

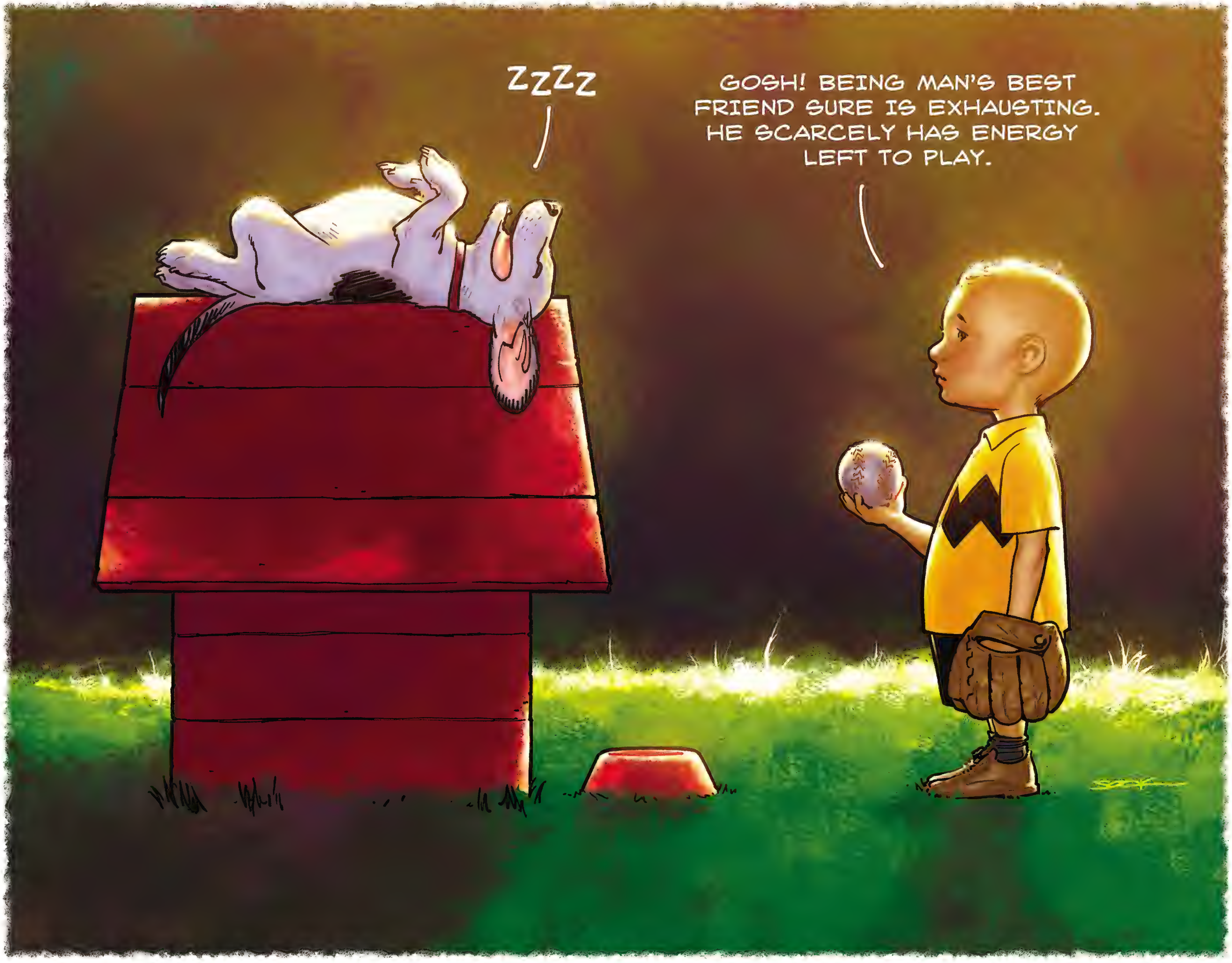
WHAM

Did you know that there are a number of Kickstarter projects that **never** follow through?

KEEF

KICK STARTER

END!


ZzZz
GOSH! BEING MAN'S BEST FRIEND SURE IS EXHAUSTING. HE SCARCELY HAS ENERGY LEFT TO PLAY.

PEANUTS

funnies

Hey blockhead! What are you **DOING?**

I've decided to write an essay that summarizes **EXACTLY** how I feel about the world in case I die in a **TRAIN WRECK.**

Why would you die in a **TRAIN WRECK?**

I guess because they don't have seatbelts.

WHATEVER. Can I read it?

It's really intended to be read posthumously. Preferably at my funeral.

Can you tell me what it's about at least?

It's a summary of the fundamental truths of living as told by an eight year old boy with his finger on the **pulse** of **existence.**

HEY!

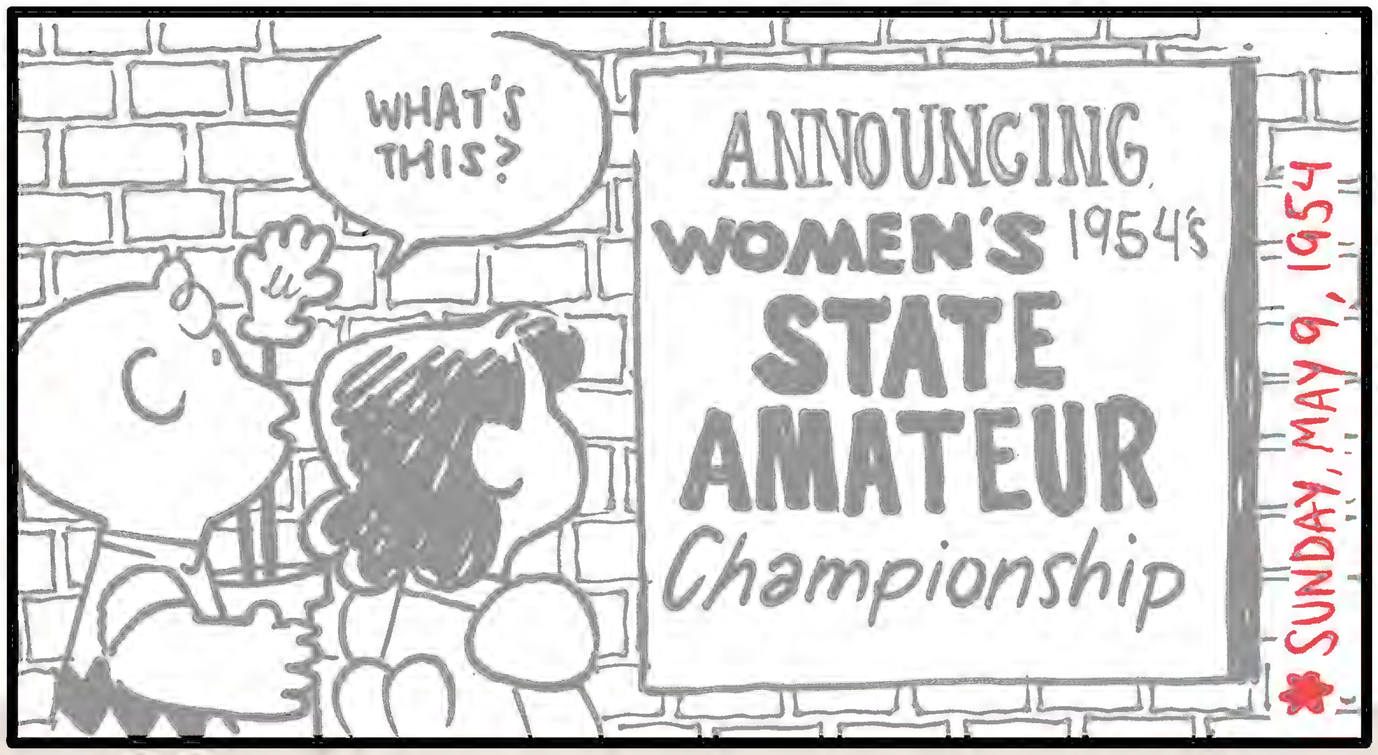
"I'm not sure I ever did anything right, but I'm dead now so it doesn't matter."

WOW.

If anybody ever finds this, you're going to have to talk to a **SPECIALIST.**

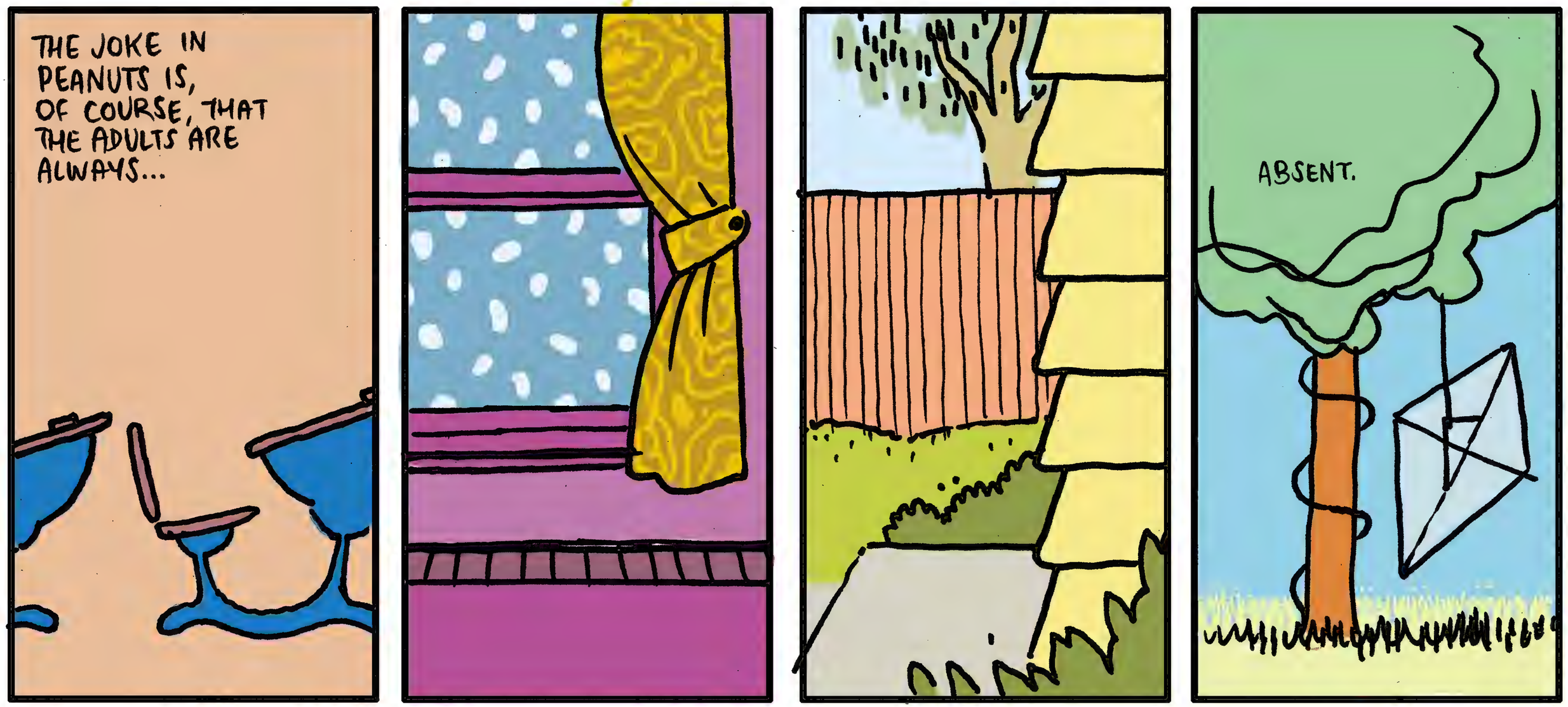
There's a reason these things are meant to be read **AFTER** you're dead.

-ZAC GORMAN



EARLY ON IN THE RUN OF PEANUTS, THERES A SERIES OF STRIPS WHERE LUCY COMPETES IN A WOMEN'S GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP.

IT'S ALSO THE ONLY TIME ADULTS APPEAR IN THE PEANUTS UNIVERSE.


THE JOKE IN PEANUTS IS, OF COURSE, THAT THE ADULTS ARE ALWAYS...
ABSENT.

THE MOST WE EVER GET IS THE SOUND OF THAT DISAPPOINTED TROMBONE.

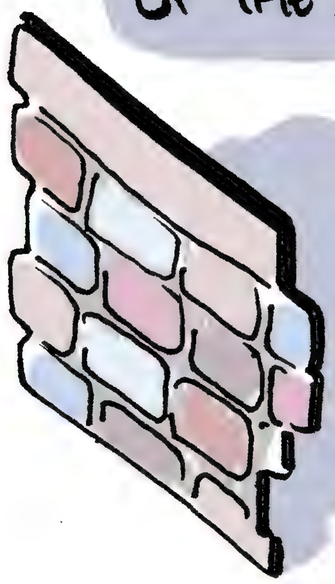
WHICH LEADS ME TO WONDER, WHO IS ORGANIZING THE CHRISTMAS PLAY?

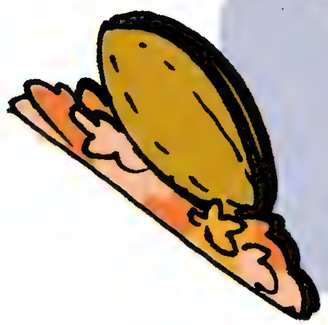
WHO RUNS THE CHRISTMAS TREE FARM?

WHO DELIVERS ALL THOSE HOLIDAY CARDS AND MYSTERIOUS PACKAGES FOR SNOOPY?

I ALWAYS FORGET THAT LINUS' RETELLING OF THE CHRISTMAS STORY IS DELIVERED TO AN EMPTY ROOM DURING REHEARSALS.

IN OUR OWN ADULT FILLED LIVES, THE ICONOGRAPHY OF PEANUTS HAS BECOME SO RECOGNIZABLE, SO REMOVED FROM THE CONTEXT OF THE STRIP ITSELF, THAT THEYVE PERMEATED OUR CHILDHOODS

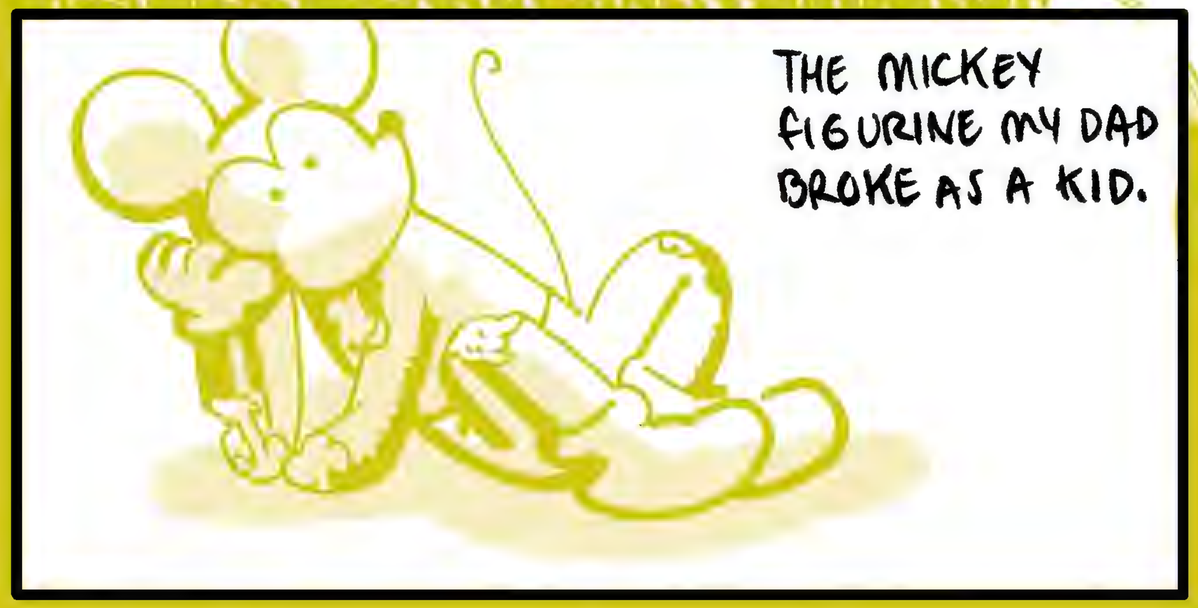




WHEN I WAS GROWING UP,
MY GRANDPARENTS HAD A STUFFED RED BARON THAT SAT IN THEIR LIVING ROOM UNTIL THE HOUSE WAS SOLD. I'M SURE IT WAS A GIFT, ALBEIT MAYBE A LITTLE INSENSITIVE CONSIDERING MY GRANDFATHER WAS A RADIO DISPATCH ONBOARD A B-17 BOMBER.

THEY LIVED OUT ON LONG ISLAND IN A SQUAT WHITE HOUSE, COVERED IN IVY.

I LOVED THAT HOUSE, AND REMEMBER IT SO WELL.



PLAYING MAGIC CARDS
AND CHANGING THE RULES
TO CHEAT MY LITTLE BROTHER
OUT OF HIS GOOD CARDS.

FIGHTING WITH HIM
ON THE FRONT LAWN.

THAT BEAUTIFUL OAK
TREE THAT WAS IN
EVERY GROUP PHOTO

CRANBERRY JUICE
AND GINGERALE.

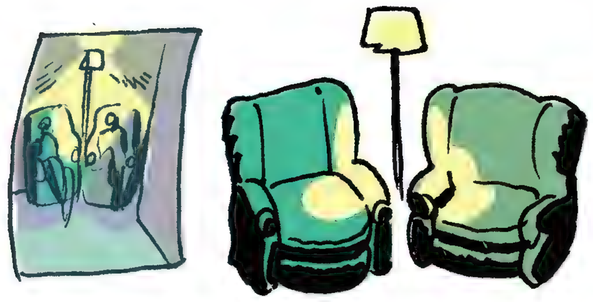
WRITING MY GRANDFATHER'S
EULOGY WHILE MY COUSIN
PLAYED 'WHO LET THE DOGS OUT'
ON REPEAT

WHO
WHO
WHO
WHO

HOW EVERY MEMORY
OF THEIR HOUSE SEEMS
TO TAKE PLACE AT DUSK.

I HAVE SUCH FOND MEMORIES OF THAT HOUSE, BUT I DON'T HAVE ANY OF MY GRANDPARENTS.

I CAN REMEMBER THEM SITTING IN THEIR ARMCHAIRS BUT I KNOW THIS BECAUSE I'VE SEEN IT IN PHOTOGRAPHS.



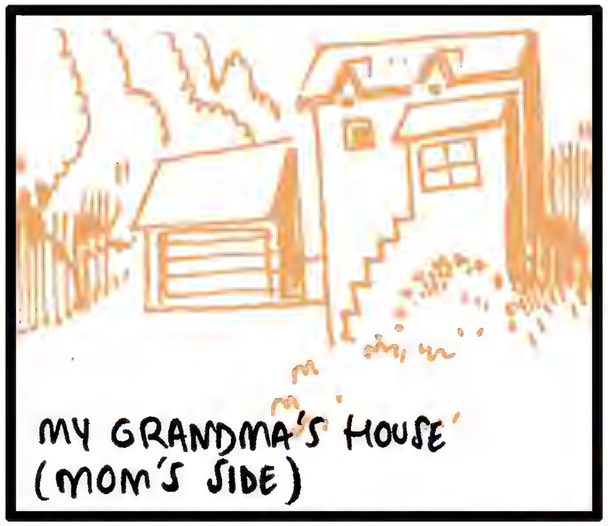
WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT, MOST OF MY ACTUAL MEMORIES ARE ADULT-LESS. TIED MORE TO PLACES, SENSATIONS, SPACES, RATHER THAN THE PEOPLE I SHARED THEM WITH.

MY UNCLE'S MINIMALIST HOUSE ON THE CHESAPEAKE.

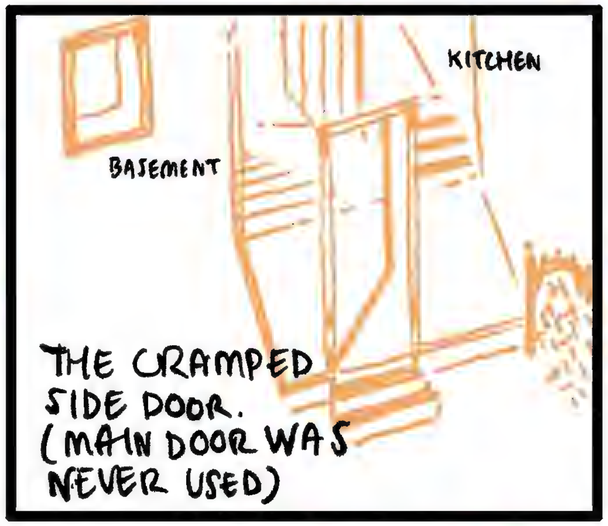
CHASING US WITH HIS 'KIMONO CATCHER'

THE DINING ROOM TABLE THAT WAS A JAPANESE BARN DOOR, UNDER GLASS.

FRESCA.

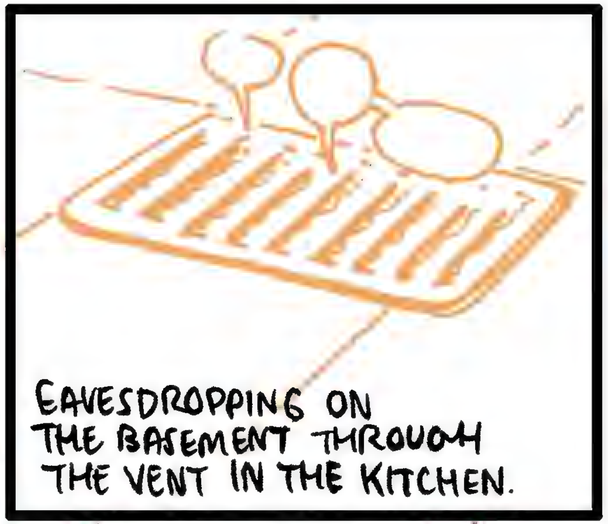


MY GRANDMA'S HOUSE (MOM'S SIDE)



THE CRAMPED SIDE DOOR. (MAIN DOOR WAS NEVER USED)

THIS LAMP.



EAVESDROPPING ON THE BASEMENT THROUGH THE VENT IN THE KITCHEN.

OUR CHURCH

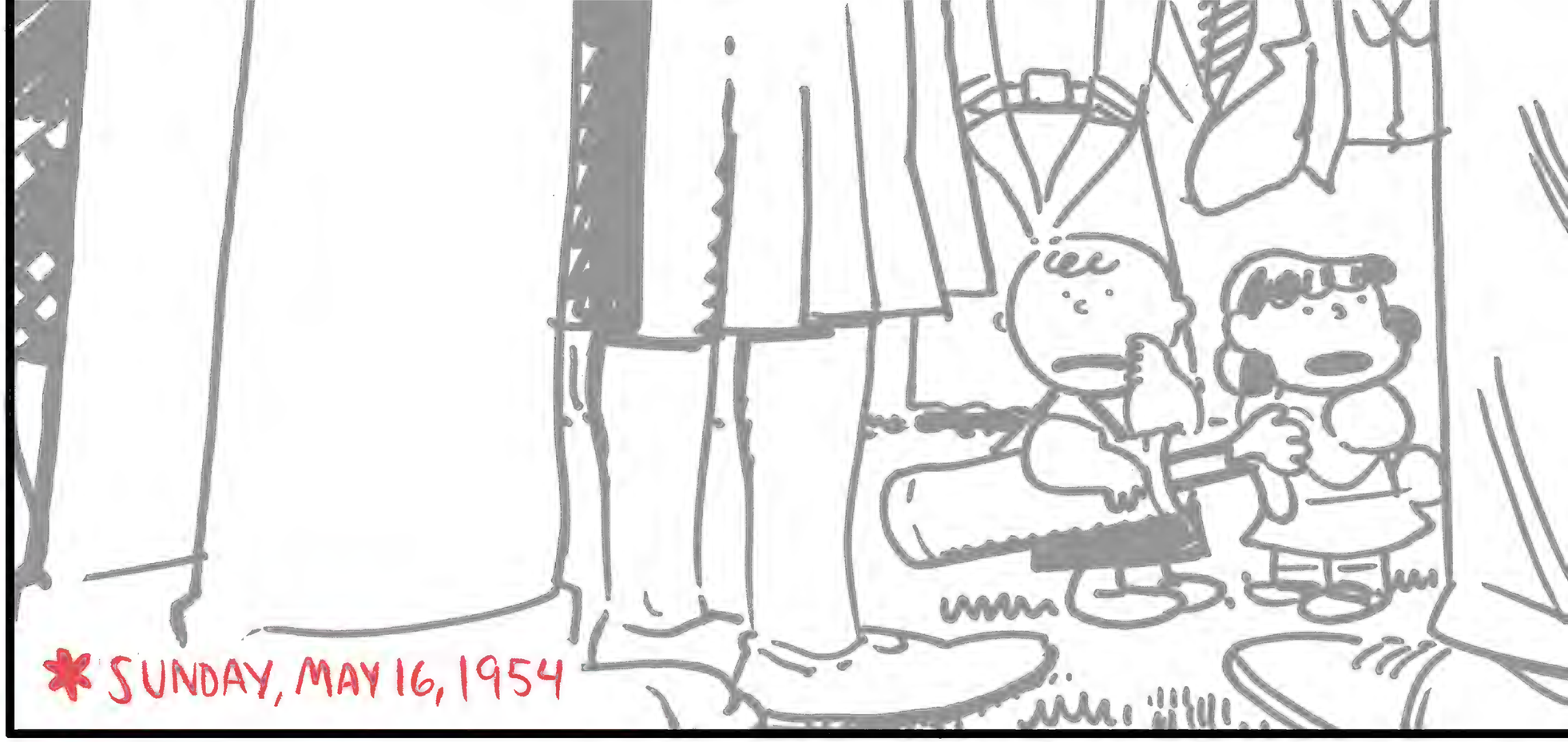
THE SMELL OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPPLY CLOSET.

THE SIDE ENTRANCE TO THE OLD FELLOWSHIP HALL

THE 'HAPPY TREE' WHERE LEFTOVER COMMUNION WINE WENT

I LIKE THAT GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP STRIP BECAUSE ITS CHARLIE BROWN AND LUCY RECOGNIZING THE EDGE OF THEIR REALITIES.

WHAT DOES ADULTHOOD EVEN MEAN TO A PAIR OF SELF RELIANT CHILDREN?



THE CONCEIT OF THE STRIP IS THAT LUCY IS OBLIVIOUS TO BEING AN EQUAL COMPETITOR WITH THE ADULTS.

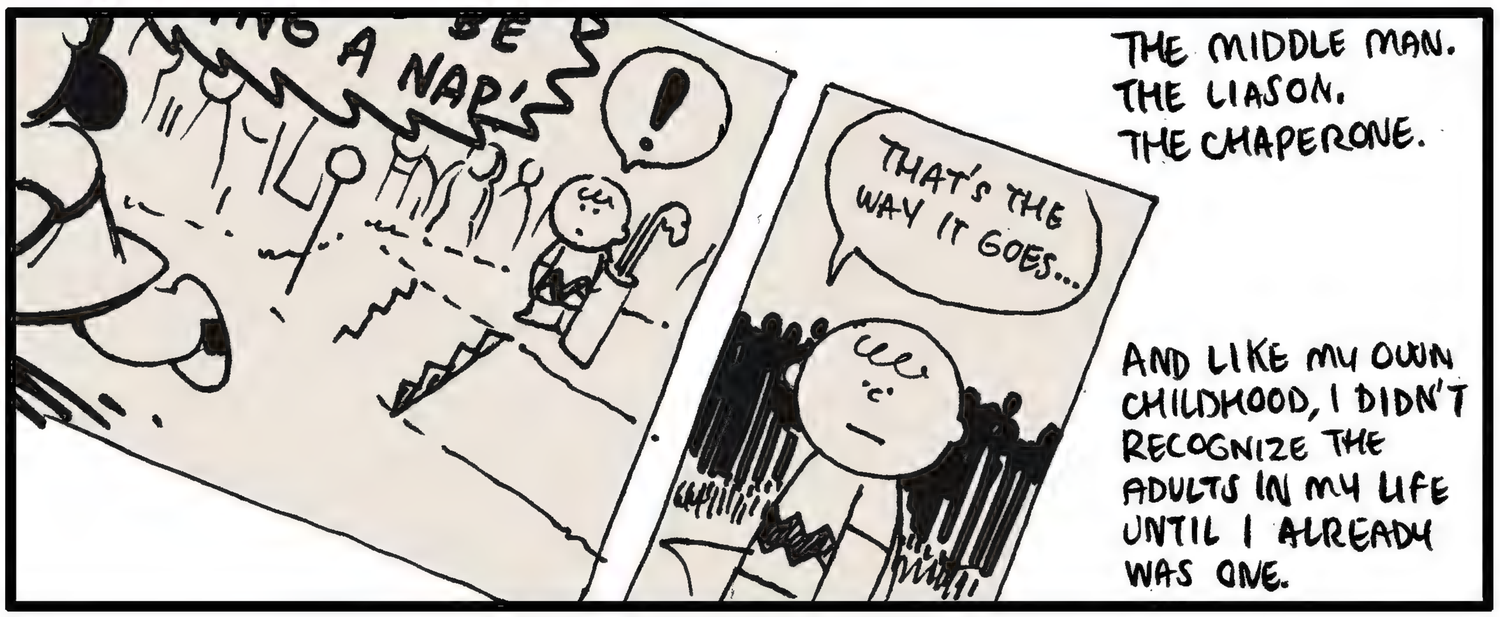
SHE ONLY LOSES HER COOL, AND BY EXTENSION, THE CHAMPIONSHIP, WHEN SHE REMEMBERS THAT SHE IS JUST A KID.

GROWING UP, I ALWAYS WANTED TO SIT AT THE ADULT TABLE BUT AS THE OLDER BROTHER, I NEVER GOT TO. I WAS THE CHAPERONE, THE LINK BETWEEN AGE GROUPS.

ITS TOUGH GETTING CAUGHT IN BETWEEN. YOU CAN'T CHAPERONE THE KID'S TABLE AND REMAIN A KID.

SCHULZ WAS VERY OPEN ABOUT CHARLIE BROWN BEING A MINIATURE VERSION OF HIMSELF.

WHICH ANSWERS MY QUESTION, THE ONLY ADULT IN PEANUTS IS, OF COURSE, CHARLIE BROWN.



THE MIDDLE MAN.
THE LIASON.
THE CHAPERONE.

AND LIKE MY OWN CHILDHOOD, I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE THE ADULTS IN MY LIFE UNTIL I ALREADY WAS ONE.

MY GRANDMA NOW LIVES UPSTATE WITH MY AUNT AND UNCLE IN A LARGE RENOVATED THREE STORY HOUSE.

AND SHE STILL HAS THAT SAME ARMCHAIR.

J. Sorese '2015
for my family

"A DARK and SNOWY NIGHT"

by JIMMY GOWNLEY

When I was a little boy, there were few things I loved as much as "Peanuts."

I spent hours in my room, poring over my beat up paperbacks.

The characters and their world were real to me.

I wanted to live in those panels.

Every December, my family would watch "A Charlie Brown Christmas" together...

LIGHTS PLEASE!

...And the next day, my dad and I would go out and find the ugliest, scrawniest tree, and decorate it as our very own "Charlie Brown Tree."

THAT ONE!

One year, just before Christmas, my little town of Girardville was hit with a terrible blizzard.

My dad worked for the highway department, and so he was called out to plow the roads.

We didn't get a chance to find our special tree.

I was so upset that I cried myself to sleep. Not because I was disappointed, but because I knew dad felt he let me down.

IT'S SUCH A STUPID, SMALL THING...

...BUT FOR SOME REASON, WHEN DAD PASSED AWAY, IT WAS ONE OF THE THINGS I THOUGHT OF.

ANYWAY, I'M ALL GROWN UP NOW, AND A CARTOONIST LIKE MY IDOL, CHARLES SCHULZ...

AND IF THERE IS ONE THING I LEARNED FROM CHARLES SCHULZ...

...IT'S THAT A CARTOONIST CAN TAKE THE PAIN OF THE PAST...

...AND TURN IT INTO *MAGIC*.

:PSST...:

"JIMMY..."

...WAKE UP!

Huh...?

NO.

WAY.

PEANUTS

IT'S SNOOPY!

IT'S **THE SNOOPY!**

POOR BLIGHTER!

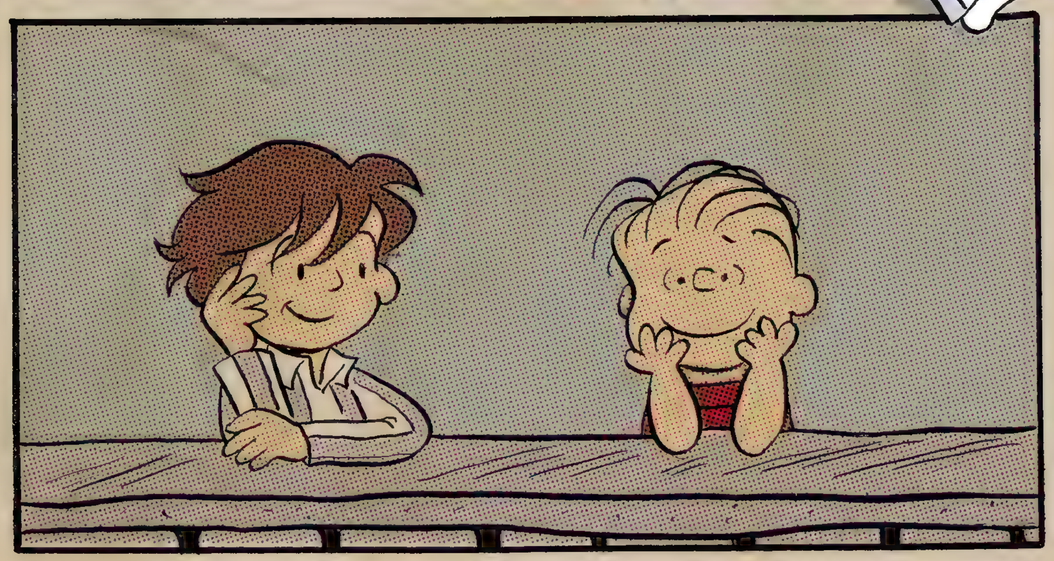
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS!

HE ACTS AS IF HE NEVER MET A DECORATED AIRMAN BEFORE!!

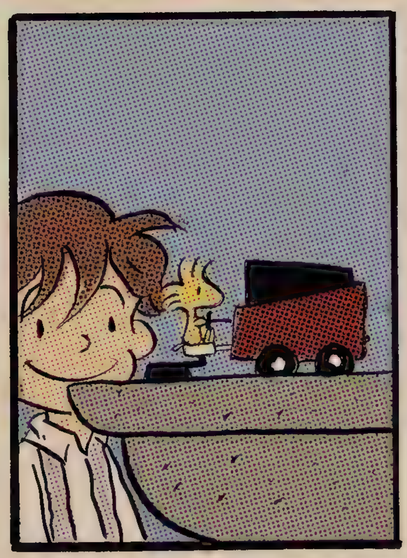
GET IT TOGETHER, MAN!!! THIS IS WAR!! WE NEED TO KEEP OUR WITS ABOUT US!

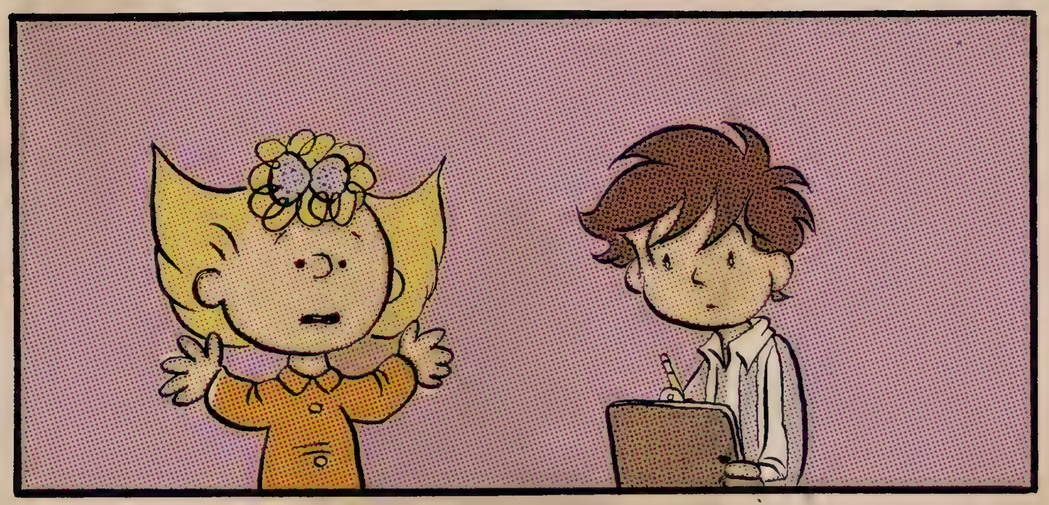
PEANUTS
featuring
"Good ol'
Jimmy Gownley"
NOW, FOLLOW ME!

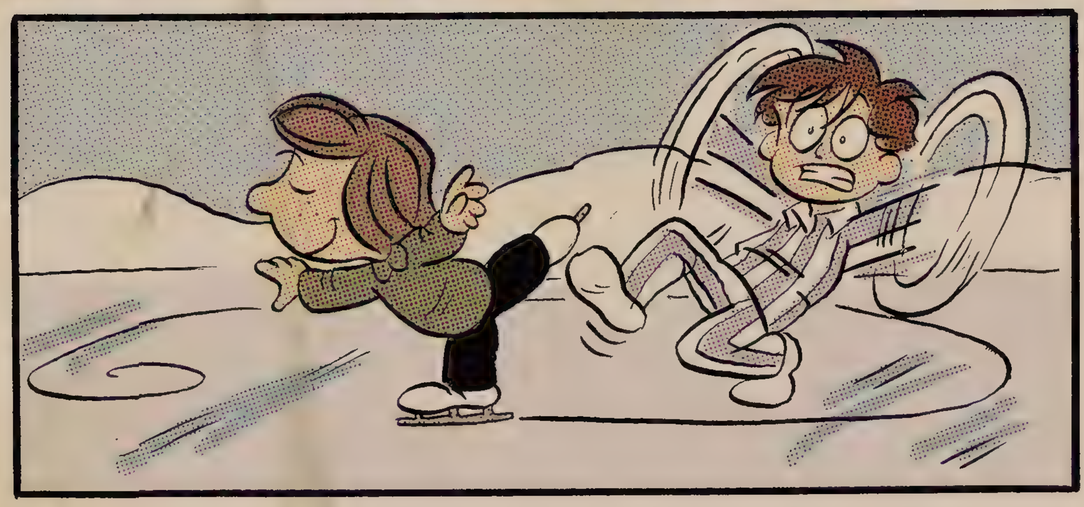
CONTACT!!

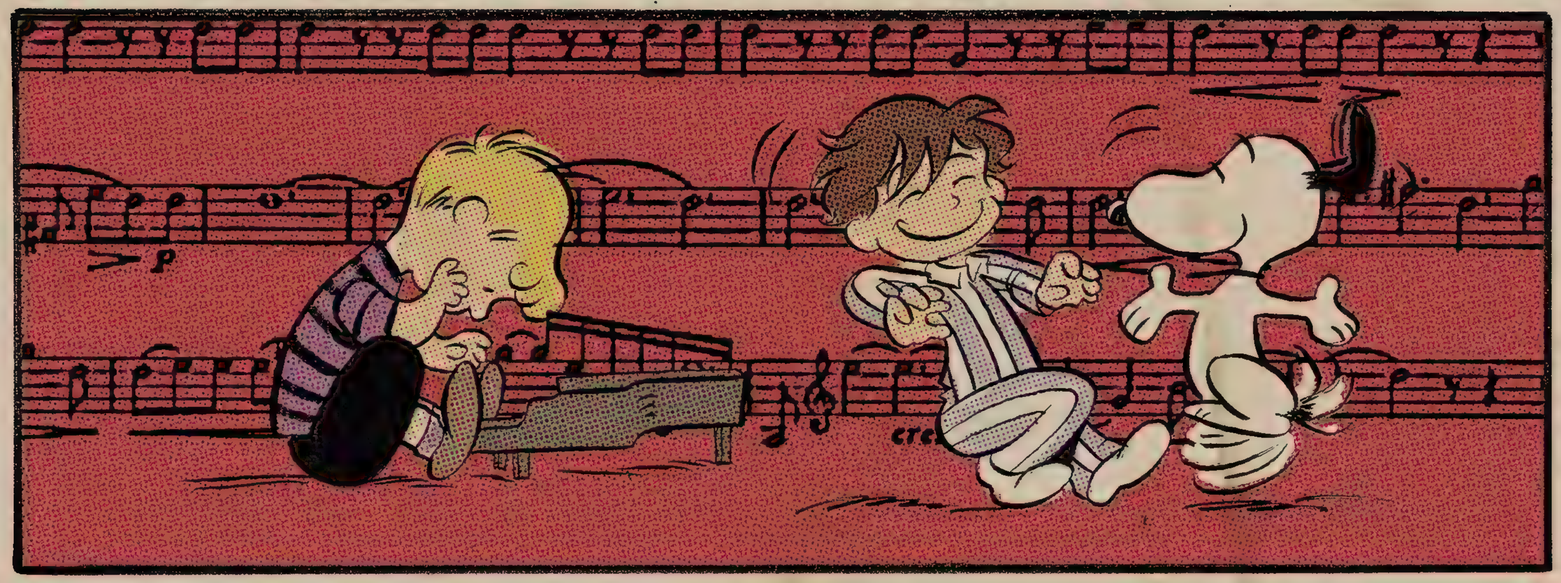


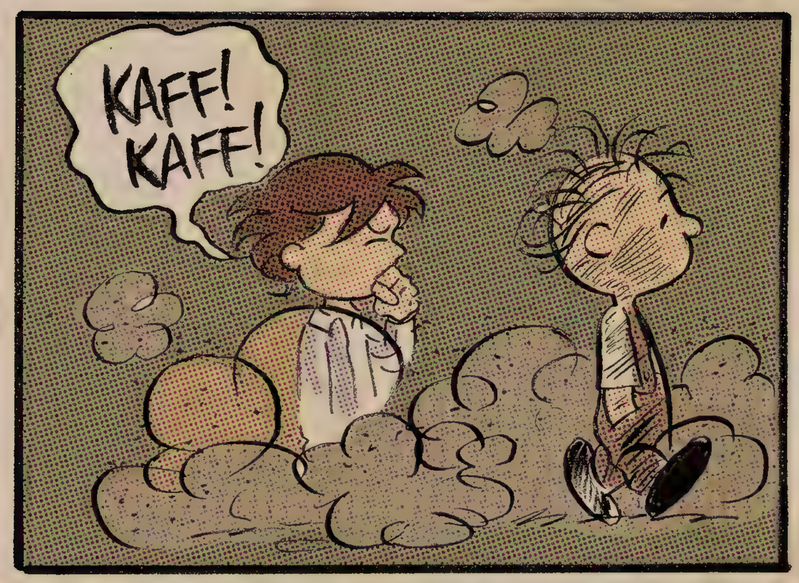
PSYCHIATRIC
HELP 5¢
THE
DOCTOR
IS
IN

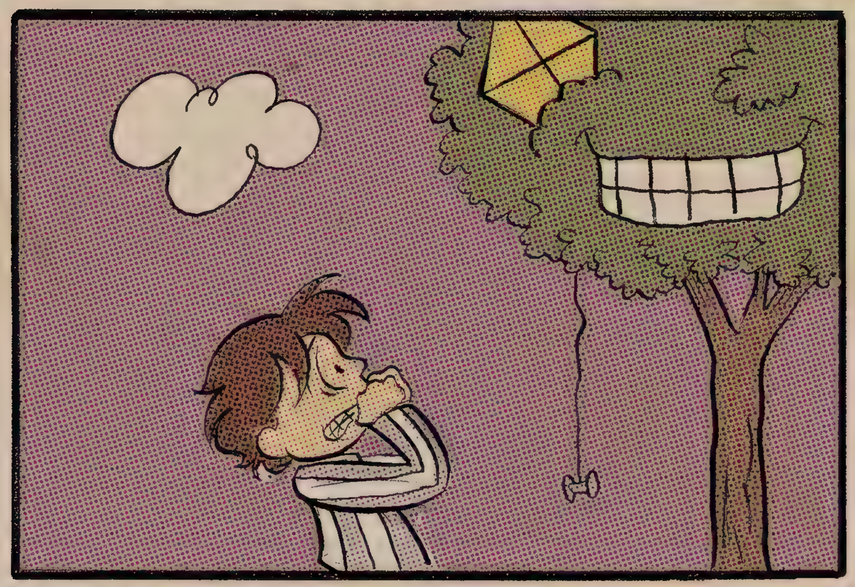


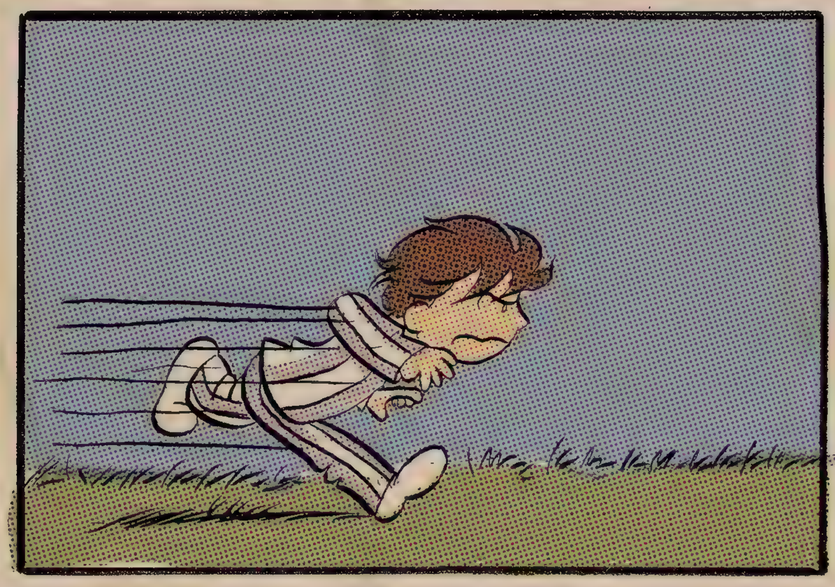


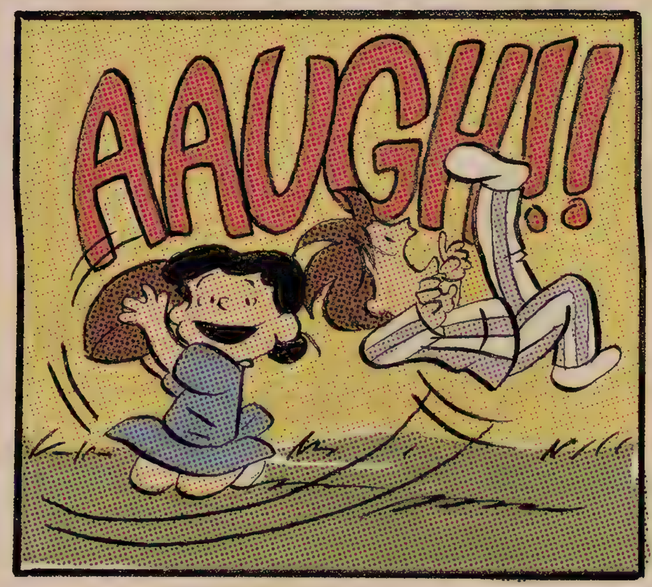




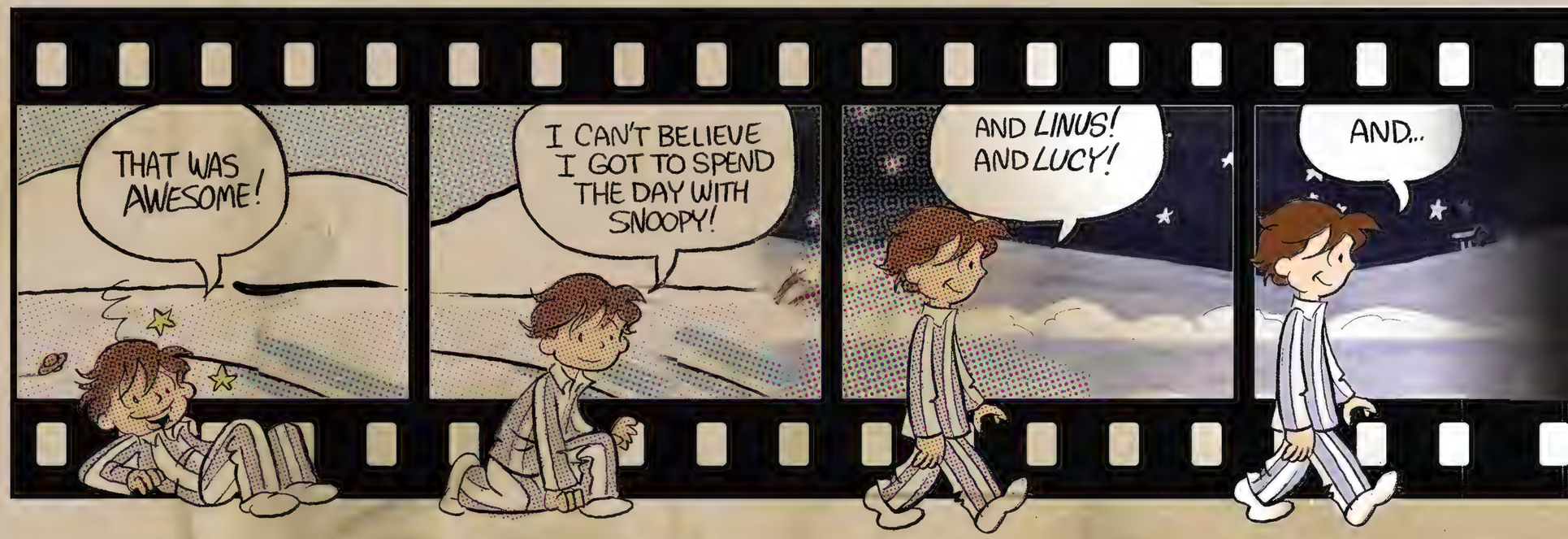

KAFF!
KAFF!






AAUGH!!

WHAM!!


THAT WAS AWESOME!
I CAN'T BELIEVE I GOT TO SPEND THE DAY WITH SNOOPY!
AND LINUS! AND LUCY!
AND...

IT'S...

...CHARLIE BROWN!

:SIGH:

UNFORTUNATELY!

WHAT'S WRONG? ARE YOU HAVING A BAD DAY?

ACTUALLY, NO.

I MEAN SURE... I'VE BEEN MOCKED, PICKED ON, AND HUMILIATED, BUT DON'T FORGET, I ALSO MURDERED A DEFENSELESS CHRISTMAS TREE, AND SUFFERED DEPRESSION SO SEVERE, THAT IT CAUSED ME TO SEEK HELP FROM A SADIST IN A LEMONADE STAND

CHRISTMAS TREE?!

...WHICH MAKES IT A REGULAR OL' DAY FOR A BLOCKHEAD LIKE ME!!

YOU'RE NOT A BLOCKHEAD, CHARLIE BROWN!

YOU'RE MY HERO!

HERO? ME?!

HOW CAN I BE YOUR HERO? I DON'T EVEN KNOW YOU!!

BUT I KNOW *YOU!* YOU'VE CHEERED ME UP WHEN I WAS DOWN! YOU'VE MADE ME LAUGH WHEN I WAS SAD! YOU MADE ME REALIZE THAT IT'S OKAY TO FAIL, AS LONG AS I ALWAYS TRY MY BEST! I KNOW YOU DON'T KNOW ME, CHARLIE BROWN...

...BUT YOU'RE ONE OF THE BEST FRIENDS I'VE EVER *HAD!!*

SAY, IS THERE ANY CHANCE YOU FORGOT TO TAKE SOME MEDICATION?

ACTUALLY, YES... BUT THAT'S NOT THE POINT!

JUST GO BACK TO YOUR TREE! GO BACK THERE *RIGHT NOW!!*

YOU'LL SEE THAT I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO FEELS THIS WAY!

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

MERRY CHRISTMAS, CHARLIE BROWN!!

HARK the "HAROLD ANGELS" SING!

>SIGH<

THAT GETS ME EVERY TIME!

HEY!
HEY, KID!

THANKS FOR ALL THOSE NICE THINGS YOU SAID! I THINK MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT! MAYBE I'M NOT A BLOCKHEAD!

MAYBE THINGS ARE LOOKING UP FOR GOOD OL' CHARLIE BROWN!

YEAH...
...YEAH, MAYBE.

ANYWAY, IF THERE IS EVER ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU, PLEASE LET ME KNOW!

YOU MEAN THAT?
OF COURSE!

WELL, IN THAT CASE...

THERE IS ONE THING...

TWELVE HOURS, AND IT'S STILL COMING DOWN!

AT LEAST I CAN GET A FEW HOURS SLEEP...

IT'S NOT GONNA BE MUCH OF A CHRISTMAS.

I WONDER IF...

?

NOW, WHERE IN THE WORLD DID THAT COME FROM?

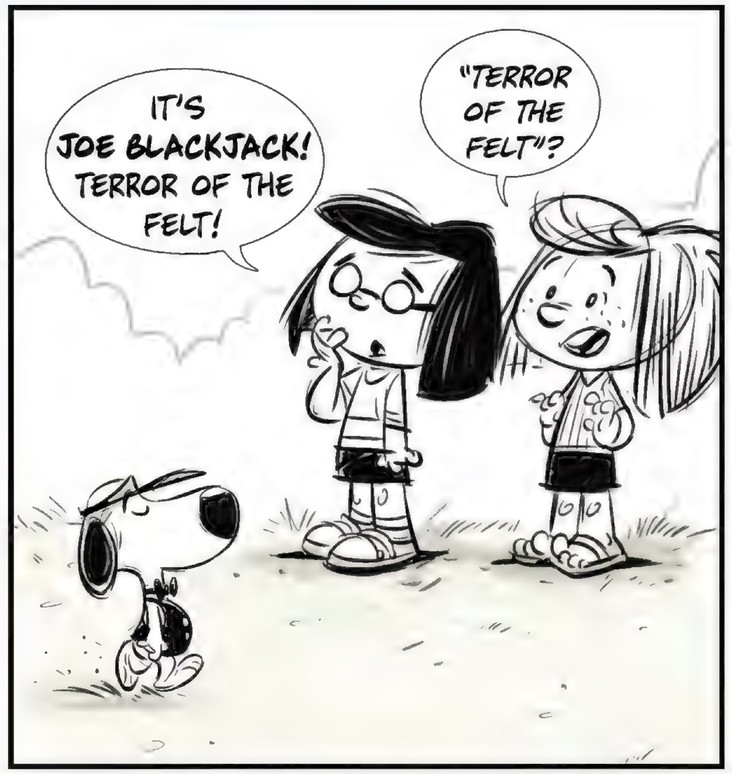
DEDICATED WITH LOVE TO MY *OTHER* HEROES:

CHARLES "SPARKY" SCHULZ

AND

JAMES "ROCK" GOWNLEY

Joe Blackjack



I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! IT'S *HIM!*

KING OF THE CASINOS!

I'VE GOT TO GET AN AUTOGRAPH! I'VE GOTTA SHAKE HIS HAND!

PLEASE! NO DIRT ON THE VISOR.

THEY SAY HIS BOWTIE WILL BE IN THE CARDSHARK HALL OF FAME.

OHHH TO BE HIS QUEEN OF HEARTS...

SORRY GIRLS, GOOD LUCK KISSES WILL ONLY DISTRACT ME.

MAYBE I SHOULD FIND A GAME WHERE THEY PLAY FOR MORE THAN **BIRDSEED.**

THE END

MIKE

It's The Great Old Ones, Charlie Brown

A WEIRD **PEANUTS** TALE

by EVAN DORKIN and DEREK CHARM

DEAR PEN-PAL, THANKS FOR WRITING ME BACK. YOUR LETTER CHEERED ME UP AFTER ANOTHER CRUMMY DAY.

VIOLET AND PATTY SAID IF ME AND SHERMY BUILT THEM A CLUBHOUSE WE COULD JOIN. BUT IT WAS A TRICK.

YOU? TAKE THE OATH? HA HA HA!

HA HA HA! THAT'S A LAUGH!

ESOTERI ORDE OF DAG

NO NON-INITIATES ALLOWED!

WELL, THAT'S WHAT I GET FOR HANGING AROUND WITH "GOOD OL'" CHARLIE BROWN. HOW I *HATE* HIM!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT. WHY DON'T PEOPLE LIKE ME? WHY ARE PEOPLE SO CRUEL?

EVEN MY CRAZY DOG IGNORES ME.

SNOOPY! HEY BOY! SNOOPY?

SNOOPY

LONELINESS IS A TERRIBLE THING. I FEEL LIKE AN OUTSIDER. LIKE I DON'T FIT IN.

sigh.

YOU ARE MY ONLY FRIEND. NOT COUNTING YOU I AM FRIENDLESS. I HAVE NO OTHER FRIENDS.

YOUR FRIEND, CHARLIE BROWN

P.S. EVERYBODY HATES ME

P.P.S. I'LL BE USING A PENCIL FROM NOW ON. PLEASE DON'T HATE ME

DEAR PENCIL-PAL, HOW HAVE YOU BEEN? I'VE HAD A BAD DAY.

IT STARTED WHEN I SHOWED SCHROEDER MY TOY PIANO.

SEE HOW EASY IT IS, SCHROEDER? NOW LET'S HEAR YOU PLAY!

PLINK PLINK PLINK

ACK! THAT SOUND! W-WHAT IS THAT?

HE'S PLAYING THE MUSIC OF ERICH ZANN!

I THOUGHT MY BRAIN WAS GOING TO BURST! I HAD TO GET AWAY FROM THAT AWFUL SOUND!

I FELT BETTER WHEN I GOT TO LUCY'S HOUSE.

LOOK, LINUS. I'LL SHOW YOU HOW TO BUILD SOMETHING-

ALL OF A SUDDEN, HER BABY BROTHER GRABBED SOME BLOCKS AND STARTED BUILDING.

!

KLAK TAKK KLAK KLAKT

BUT WHAT HE BUILT DIDN'T MAKE ANY SENSE! IT WAS WRONG!

ALL WRONG!

I GOT SICK AT THE SIGHT OF IT!

I GUESS I'M COMING DOWN WITH SOMETHING. THAT WOULD EXPLAIN IT. BUT THOSE BLOCKS! THAT LOUSY MUSIC!

BLEAGH!

JULY 13- PATTY MET A NEW KID IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. SHE SAID HE'S VERY DIRTY.

HELLO, THERE. WHAT'S *YOUR* NAME?

I HAVEN'T GOT A NAME. PEOPLE JUST CALL ME THINGS.

UNNAMABLE, HUH? WHAT DO THEY CALL YOU MOST OF THE TIME?

THEY CALL ME *"P'YGTHY-P'NH".*

"PEGGY-THPIN"?

NO, "P'YGTHY-P'NH".

"PIGGIE-PEN"? "PEEG-THPEN"?

"P'YGTHY-P'NH"!

OH! *"PIG-PEN"!*

SIGH. CLOSE ENOUGH.

JULY 14- I MET "PIG-PEN" TODAY. HE SEEMS OKAY. A LITTLE WEIRD, THOUGH.

HI KID, TELL ME... HAVE YOU FOUND THE YELLOW SIGN?

?

SEPT 8- "PIG-PEN" HAS BECOME A BIG INFLUENCE ON EVERYONE AROUND HERE.

I AM AFFIXED WITH THE DIRT AND DUST OF ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS! THE ESSENTIAL SALTES! THE SOIL AND I ARE ONE! ABHOTH! IÄ! IÄ!

EXCEPT FOR SHERMY.

I-I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD! I NEED SOME *AIR! COOL AIR!*

YOU SEE? NOT ALL ARE FAVORED.

BY THE WAY... I SEE YOU'VE FOUND THE YELLOW SIGN.

APRIL 12- I KNOW THIS SOUNDS CRAZY, BUT I'M PRETTY SURE A TREE ATE MY KITE TODAY.

CHOMP CHOMP CHOMP

MAY 2-I'M DISTURBED. IT SEEMED JUST YESTERDAY LUCY WAS A SWEET LITTLE GIRL AND LINUS A BABY. NOW THEY'RE AS BIG AS ME.

LUCY HAS BECOME AN UTTER TERROR, DISPLAYING WHAT LINUS CALLS A "HIDEOUS PRETERNATURAL STRENGTH".

I AM TORN BETWEEN THE DESIRE TO CREATE AND DESTROY!

LINUS IS LIKE TWO DIFFERENT PEOPLE. ONE MINUTE HE'S FULL OF CRAZY GROWN-UP THOUGHTS.

DO "GOOD" AND "EVIL" EXIST? OR ARE THEY MERELY CONSTRUCTS CONCEIVED BY A STUNTED HUMANITY TO PUT ORDER TO CHAOS?

?

THE NEXT HE ACTS LIKE IT'S A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH IF SOMEONE TAKES AWAY HIS BLANKET.

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT TO SAY ABOUT SNOOPY. I WISH I HAD A NORMAL DOG

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT, LINUS. HOW COME HE DOESN'T FALL OFF? IT'S UNNERVING.

Z

SNOOPY

WHAT UNSETTLES ME ARE THE RUMORS OF WHAT'S INSIDE... A LIBRARY, A POOL TABLE, A TILLINGHAST RESONATOR... IT DEFIES ALL CONVENTIONAL LAWS OF PHYSICS!

!

OF COURSE, IT COULD ALWAYS JUST BE A FOURTH DIMENSIONAL TESSERACT SPACE.

?

JUNE 1- HOW HAVE YOU BEEN? THINGS HERE ARE THE SAME. I AM HATED AND ALONE.

GOOD MORNING LADIES, I LIKE YOUR NEW INNSMOUTH LOOK. VERY BECOMING.

OH, THANK YOU.

ESOTERIC ORDER OF DAGON

NO NON INITIATES ALLOWED!

I THINK YOU LOOK NICE, TOO.

SO WHAT? WHO ASKED YOUR OPINION, CHARLIE BROWN?

GO ON HOME! WE DON'T WANT YOU AROUND HERE!

JUNE 11- YESTERDAY WAS ONE OF THE WORST DAYS IN MY LIFE.

IF CHARLIE BROWN CATCHES THIS BALL, WE'LL WIN THE CHAMPIONSHIP.

CATCH IT, CHARLIE BROWN! CATCH IT OR YOU'LL BE THE GOAT!

JUST AS THE BALL CAME DOWN, I FELT SOMETHING MOVE BENEATH THE PITCHER'S MOUND.

?

OH, YOU BLOCK-HEAD! YOU SHINING TRAPEZOHEDRON-HEAD!

FLOP!

I TRIED TO EXPLAIN BUT THEY WOULDN'T EVEN LISTEN.

BAAAH!

CHARLIE BROWN DROPPED THE BALL! HE'S THE GOAT!

THE GOAT WITH A THOUSAND YOUNG!

I WAS TOO DEPRESSED AND SCARED TO SLEEP. I'M IN SAD SHAPE.

"GOAT WITH A THOUSAND YOUNG"?

MARCH 27- TODAY I WENT TO A PROFESSIONAL TO GET HELP. IT WAS A BIG MISTAKE.

TELL ME, ARE YOU AFRAID OF RESPONSIBILITY? IF YOU ARE, YOU HAVE HYPENGYOPHOBIA.

PSYCHICAL HELP 5¢

THE DOCTOR IS FHTAGN

I DON'T THINK SO—

HOW ABOUT TOADS? THAT WOULD INDICATE TSATHOGGUA.

WELL, SORT OF. I'M NOT SURE.

ARE YOU AFRAID OF SEA-SPAWN? IF YOU ARE THEN YOU HAVE MOTHER HYDRAPHOBIA. MAYBE YOU HAVE YITHSTERIA, THE FEAR OF FLYING POLYPS, OR NYARLATHOTEPOPHOBIA, WHICH IS THE FEAR OF THE CRAWLING CHAOS.

OR MAYBE YOU HAVE THE LURKING FEAR. DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE THE LURKING FEAR?

WHAT'S THE LURKING FEAR?

THE FEAR THAT REALITY ISN'T WHAT IT SEEMS, THAT A GREATER REALITY LIES JUST OUTSIDE OUR PERCEPTION, A VAST GULF OF CHAOS FILLED WITH UNKNOWABLE AND INCOMPREHENSIBLE HORRORS.

PSYCHI HELP

THAT'S IT! OH GOOD GRIEF... THAT'S IT...

FIVE CENTS, PLEASE.

MAY 26- GUESS WHAT? I HAVE A NEW BABY SISTER NAMED SALLY. I'M NO LONGER ALONE! I AM SO HAPPY. IT GIVES ME HOPE.

OCT 31- I THOUGHT HAVING A BABY SISTER WOULD CHANGE MY LIFE. BUT I WAS WRONG.

I GOT FIVE CHOCOLATE ELTDOWN SHARDS!

I GOT A BLASTED HEATH BAR!

I GOT A PACK OF GUMMY DHOLES!

I GOT A ROCK. WHO GIVES A KID ROCKS?

"MADE IN MNAR"?

LINUS SPENT HALLOWEEN IN A PUMPKIN PATCH WAITING FOR SOMEBODY CALLED "THE GREAT PUMPKIN".

ARISE, O MIGHTY MESSENGER, FATHER OF ALL, DWELLER IN DARKNESS! ARISE AND WITNESS MY SINCERITY!

AUGUST 14- I'M SORRY I HAVEN'T WRITTEN LATELY. MY LIFE HAS BECOME A NIGHTMARE OF BROODING AND DESPAIR.

A SENSITIVE PERSON CAN SEE LOTS OF THINGS IN THE CLOUD FORMATIONS... WHAT DO YOU SEE, LINUS?

WELL, THOSE CLOUDS LOOK TO ME LIKE CARCOSA FLOATING BY THE SHORES OF LAKE HALI IN THE HYADES.

THAT ONE LOOKS LIKE A PROFILE OF RICHARD UPTON PICKMAN, DECADENT PAINTER OF GRAVEYARD GHOULS.

AND THAT GROUP OF CLOUDS GIVES ME THE IMPRESSION OF GREAT CTHULU, DEAD BUT DREAMING IN HIS SUNKEN HOUSE AT R'LYEH.

UH HUH... THAT'S VERY GOOD... WHAT DO YOU SEE IN THE CLOUDS, CHARLIE BROWN?

WHAT COULD I SAY AFTER HEARING ALL THAT? THAT I SAW A DUCKY AND A HORSIE? IS EVERYONE GOING CRAZY? OR JUST ME?

JUNE 2- SNOOPY CONTINUES TO ACT MORE HUMAN EVERY DAY. I SHUDDER EVERYTIME HE WALKS BY.

JULY 12- NOW SNOOPY HAS TAKEN TO WRITING. ALL DAY AND ALL NIGHT. WHAT ON EARTH CAN A DOG BE WRITING?

TAK TAK TAK

NOVEMBER 25- NEW KIDS KEEP SHOWING UP FROM PLACES I'VE NEVER HEARD OF. KINGSPORT, AYLESBURY, BETHMOORA. WHY ARE THEY HERE? WHAT DO THEY WANT?

I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN TRUST THEM.

JUNE 16- SHERMY HAS DISAPPEARED.

NO ONE SEEMS TO EVEN REMEMBER HIM. WHAT ON EARTH IS GOING ON?

ONLY 18 SHOPPING DAYS UNTIL ERICH ZANN'S BIRTHDAY!

MAY 7- THERE'S A DREARINESS IN THE AIR THAT FILLS ME WITH DESPAIR. I FEEL LIKE I'M BEING DRAWN INTO AN ABYSS.

WHEN THE STARS ARE RIGHT, THE OLD ONES WILL RETURN, CHARLIE BROWN. HAVE YOU SEEN THE STARS LATELY? FRIGHTENING, ISN'T IT?

I'VE MADE SOME INQUIRIES REGARDING THE GREAT PUMPKIN. THERE'S A GREATER CONSPIRACY AT WORK HERE.

WE NEED TO TALK, BUT NOT HERE. THERE MAY BE EYES UPON US.

JOE COOL

JUNE 28- THE NEIGHBORHOOD HAS BECOME OVERRUN BY DOGS. A PACK OF MOON-HOWLING, MIXED-BREED HOUNDS THAT LOOK LIKE DEGRADED, DEGENERATE SNOOPYS. THIS CAN'T BE A GOOD SIGN.

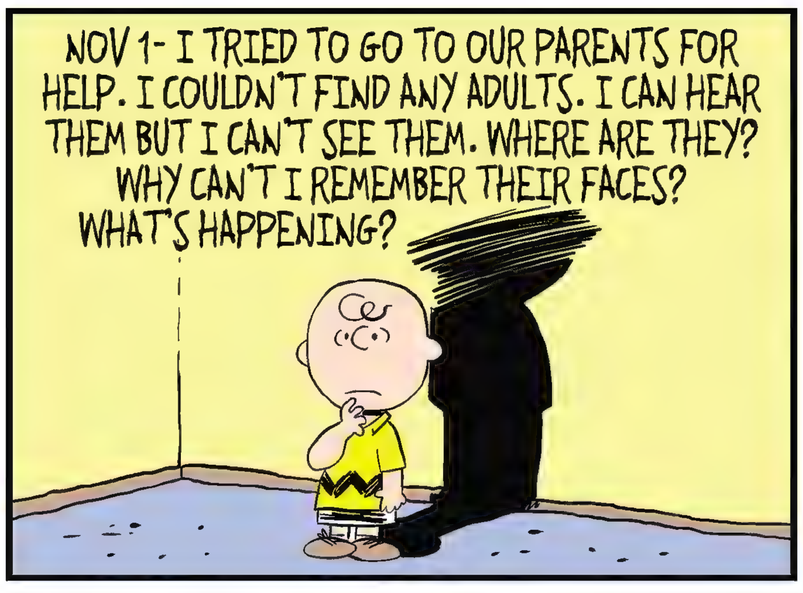
AUGUST 11- NO ONE SEES PATTY AND VIOLET ANYMORE. THEY STAY INSIDE AND NEVER COME OUT.

SEPT 17- I'M WORRIED ABOUT SALLY. WHATEVER'S AFFECTING THE NEIGHBORHOOD SEEMS TO HAVE GOTTEN TO HER.

OCT 31- SALLY IS WORSE. SHE'S USING HER OWN WEIRD "PHILOSOPHIES" TO TRY TO DISCOVER THE MEANING OF LIFE. MY OWN LITTLE SISTER! I CAN'T STAND IT.

I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE. BUT WHAT? I CAN'T EVEN WIN A BALL GAME OR FLY A KITE.

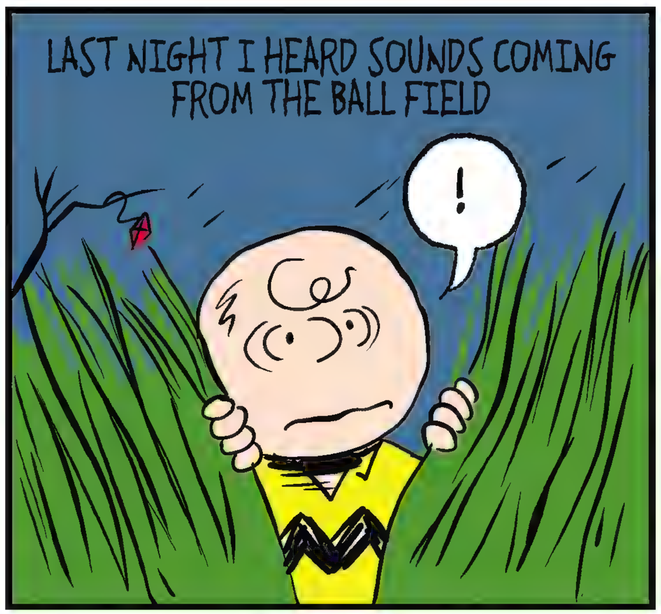
NOV 1- I TRIED TO GO TO OUR PARENTS FOR HELP. I COULDN'T FIND ANY ADULTS. I CAN HEAR THEM BUT I CAN'T SEE THEM. WHERE ARE THEY? WHY CAN'T I REMEMBER THEIR FACES? WHAT'S HAPPENING?



I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S REAL ANYMORE. HOW LONG HAVE WE BEEN PENCIL-PALS? MONTHS? YEARS? IT COULD BE DECADES. TIME IS MEANINGLESS.

I'M IN SAD SHAPE. MY STOMACH HURTS. MAYBE I'M DYING. I MUST SPEAK TO LINUS. MAYBE HE'LL KNOW WHAT TO DO.

DEAR PENCIL-PAL.
THIS WILL PROBABLY BE MY LAST LETTER TO YOU.
BECAUSE I AM DOOMED.
WE'RE ALL DOOMED.

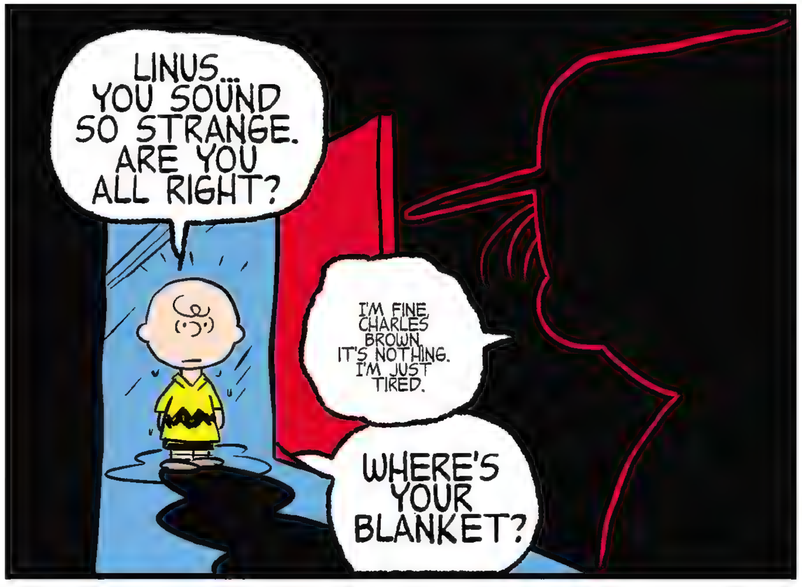

LAST NIGHT I HEARD SOUNDS COMING FROM THE BALL FIELD
!

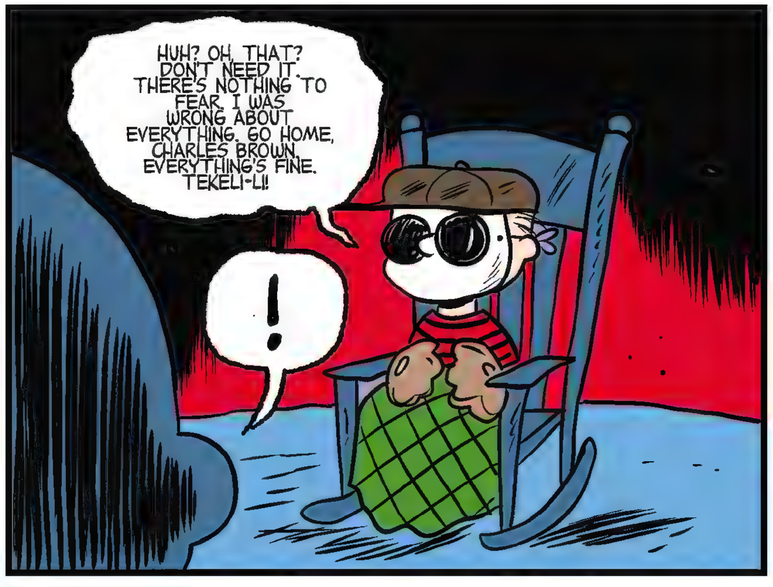
IT WAS THE GANG. THEY WERE PERFORMING SOME HIDEOUS RITUAL AT THE BASEBALL FIELD.
ZAHN

I THINK THEY WERE CALLING TO SOMEONE. OR SOME THING.

I DIDN'T STAY TO FIND OUT. I RAN TO GET LINUS.

BUT SOMETHING WAS WRONG.
H-HELLO? L-LINUS? I CAN'T SEE YOU IN THE DARKNESS—
SHHH. I'M HERE, CHARLIE BROWN.


LINUS... YOU SOUND SO STRANGE. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I'M FINE, CHARLES BROWN. IT'S NOTHING. I'M JUST TIRED.
WHERE'S YOUR BLANKET?


HUH? OH, THAT? I DON'T NEED IT. THERE'S NOTHING TO FEAR. I WAS WRONG ABOUT EVERYTHING. GO HOME, CHARLES BROWN. EVERYTHING'S FINE. TEKELI-LI!
!

I WAS ALONE. LIKE ALWAYS. BUT I KNEW WHAT I HAD TO DO. I KNEW WHERE I HAD TO GO.

I DREADED GOING INTO THAT DOGHOUSE. I NEVER FELT SO WISHY-WASHY IN ALL MY LIFE.

INSIDE, IT WENT ON FOREVER, AGAINST ALL REASON, A CRAZY MAZE OF ENDLESS TUNNELS AND CRYPT-LIKE CHAMBERS.

BLEAGH!

Pickman

THE THINGS I SAW IN THERE! THINGS NO KID SHOULD SEE!

G-GOOD GRIEF!

I FOUND SNOOPY'S LIBRARY, FILLED WITH HIS DEPRAVED WORKS AND TRANSLATIONS. MY MIND REELED FROM THE TITLES ALONE.

BOOK OF AZATHOTH... SIGSAND MANUSCRIPTS... LIBER DAMNATUS DAMNATIONUM...?

SUDDENLY, I HEARD SOMETHING IN THE ROOM WITH ME!

SKREEK SKRIKK

RATS! IN THE WALLS!

I RAN FOR MY LIFE, NOT KNOWING WHY I'D TAKEN ANY OF THOSE AWFUL BOOKS WITH ME.

WHY DID I EVER READ THEM? I'M SO STUPID! THERE ARE THINGS WE AREN'T SUPPOSED TO KNOW OR SEE OR EVEN IMAGINE!

THINGS THAT CAME FROM BEYOND THE STARS AND BROUGHT THEIR STUFF WITH THEM! A BUNCH OF CRUMMY MONSTERS LIKE

GREAT CTHULU
Sweet Babboo
~~NAYLATHO~~
NAYARTHALO
-I CAN'T EVEN COPY IT RIGHT...
AZATHOTH THE DESTROYER
HASTUR THE UNSPEAKABLE
YOG-SOTHOTH
ITHAQUA
ZOTH-OMMOG
MY EYES HURT... need more light... why am I even writing these stupid names out?

BAM! BAM! BAM!

!

BAM! BAM! BAM!

THE END IS NEAR. I HEAR A NOISE AT THE DOOR. I SHOULD PROBABLY QUIT WRITING AND...

CHARLIE BROWNNN?

COME ON OUT, YOU BLOCKHEAD, DON'T MAKE US COME IN AFTER YOU!

YEAH, COME OUTSIDE, BIG BROTHER!

I SEE YOU STILL HAVE THE YELLOW SIGN, CHARLIE BROWN.

. . .

!

SHERMY? I-IS THAT YOU? B-BUT HOW... HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE?

IT'S TIME, CHARLIE BROWN. THE FAVOURED ONES ARE CALLING...

HERE... TAKE MY HAND. WE'LL GO TO THEM TOGETHER.

SH-SHERMY, YOUR **FACE!** GOOD GRIEF, **THAT HAND!**

SH-SHERMY! **I THOUGHT WE WERE FRIENDS!**

YOU FOOL, CHARLIE BROWN! SHERMY IS DEAD!

AAAAAUGH!

"THAT IS NOT DEAD WHICH CAN ETERNAL LIE."

PEANUTS 1950-2000

MY GIRLFRIEND AND I DROVE UP TO SANTA ROSA TO VISIT MY CARTOONIST FRIEND, PAIGE.

My girlfriend

Me

©HILARY B. PRICE 2015

PAIGE WORKED FOR CHARLES SCHULZ AT HIS PEANUTS STUDIO. WE WEREN'T EXPECTING TO MEET HIM, BUT...

Paige

HE HAPPENED TO BE FREE WHEN WE GOT THERE.

CALL ME SPARKY.

HIS VOICE SOUNDED EXACTLY LIKE LINUS' FROM THE TELEVISION SPECIALS. IT WAS UNCANNY.

CAN I SHOW YOU AROUND?

AS WE WALKED THE GROUNDS, HE SEEMED TO TAKE ON HIS DIFFERENT CHARACTERS. THE SINCERE LINUS...

WELCOME TO 1 SNOOPY PLACE.

TO THE INQUISITIVE LUCY.

PSYCHIATRIC HELP 5¢

THE DOCTOR IS IN

WERE YOU GOOD IN SCHOOL? "A" STUDENTS?

YES.

TO THE "I'M-SUCH-A-FAILURE" CHARLIE BROWN.

PSYCHIATRIC HELP 5¢

THE DOCTOR IS IN

I WAS AN "F" STUDENT.

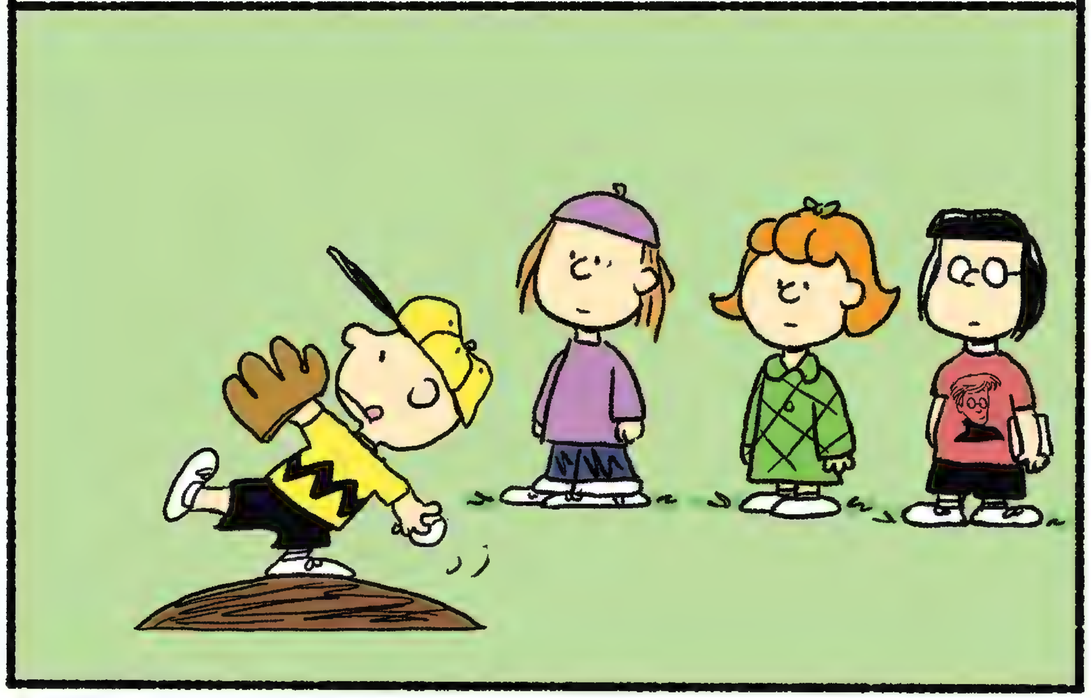
BUT SEEING AS HE WAS A MULTI-MILLIONARE, MY GIRLFRIEND CALLED HIM OUT ON IT.

PSYCHIATRIC HELP 5¢

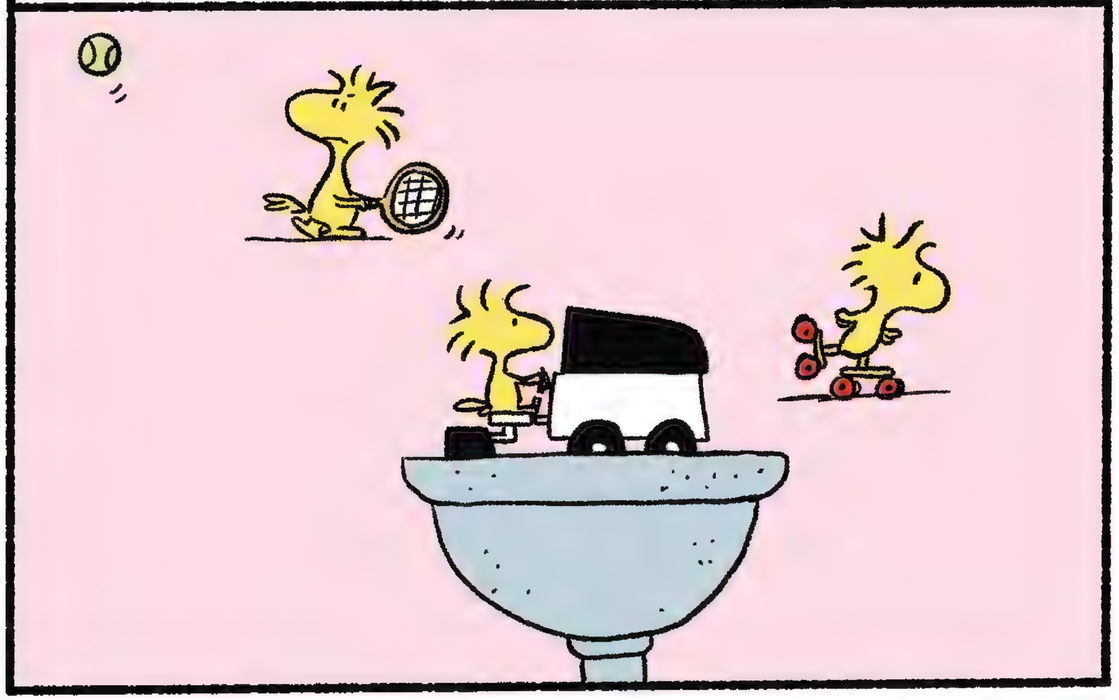
THE DOCTOR IS IN

SEEMS LIKE YOU'VE MANAGED ALRIGHT.

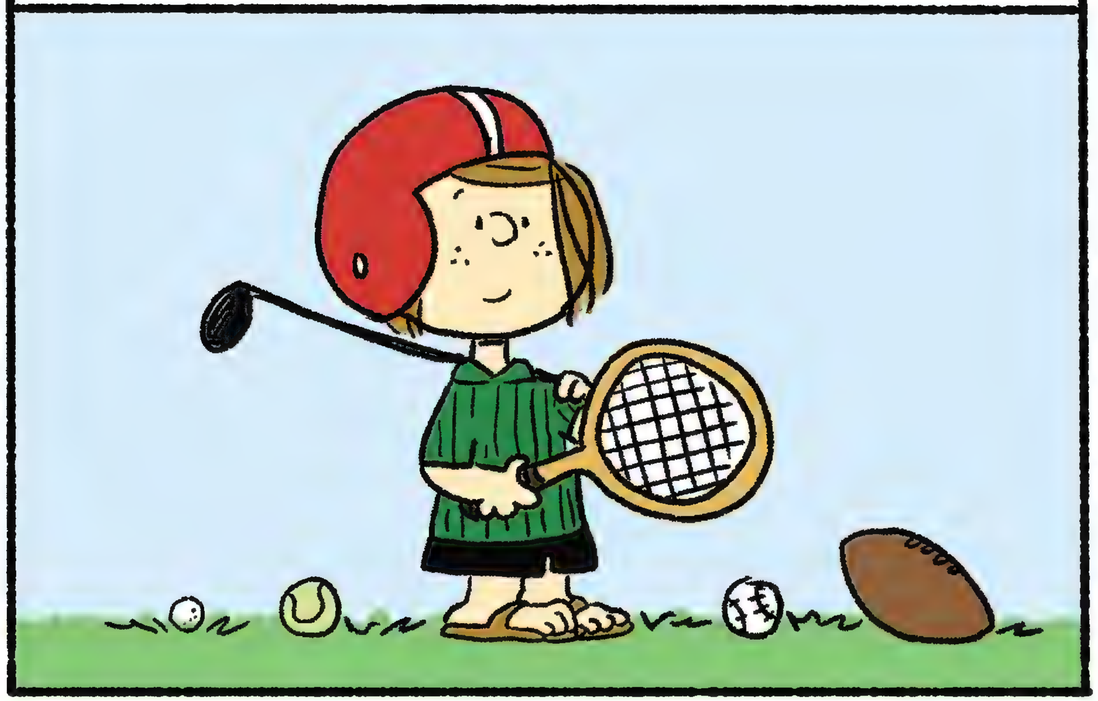
THE TOUR CONTINUED PAST THE BASEBALL DIAMOND.



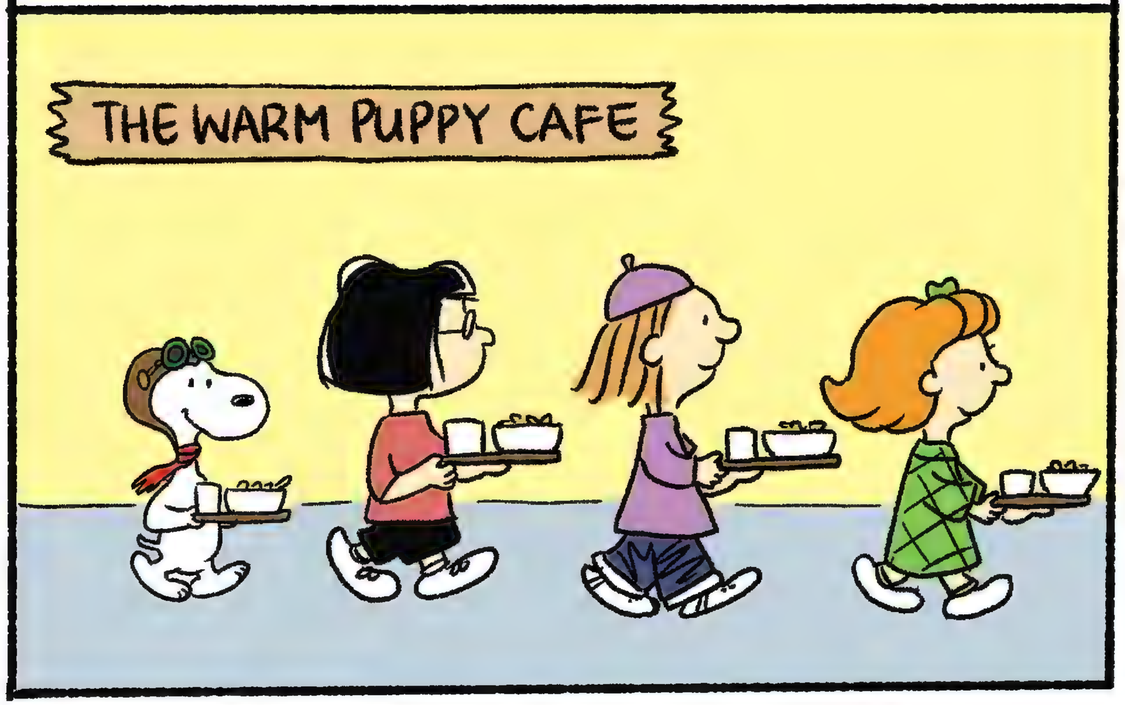
THERE WAS ALSO A TENNIS COURT, AN OUTDOOR ROLLER RINK AND AN INDOOR ICE ARENA.



IT WAS CLEAR THAT SPARKY WAS A PEPPERMINT PATTY JOCK THROUGH AND THROUGH.



HE SUGGESTED LUNCH AT THE SNACK BAR INSIDE THE ICE RINK. THIS IS WHERE HE BECAME SNOOPY.



SPARKY SAT NEXT TO MY GIRLFRIEND. MEN WERE ALWAYS QUITE TAKEN WITH HER, AND HE WAS NO EXCEPTION.

SO I SEE YOU HAVE FOUR EARRINGS ON THIS SIDE, BUT ONLY THREE ON THIS SIDE... WHY'S THAT?

GOOD GRIEF!

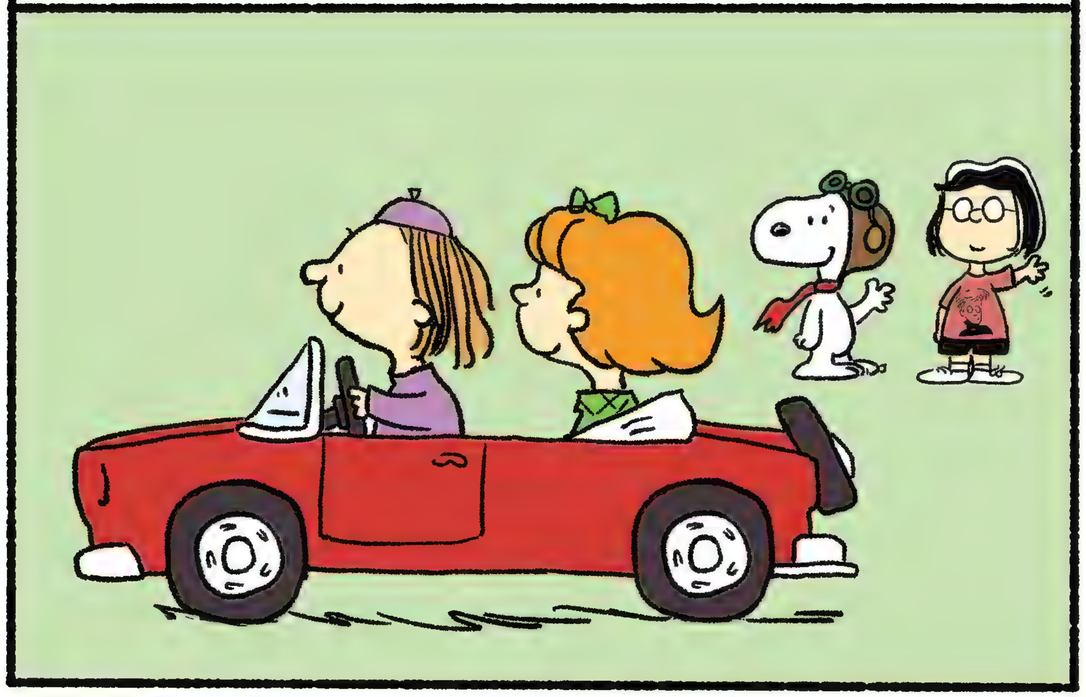
IT WAS MY TURN TO CALL HIM OUT...

WHAT'S IT TO YOU, DAD?

WHICH, THANKFULLY, MADE HIM LAUGH.

HA HA HA

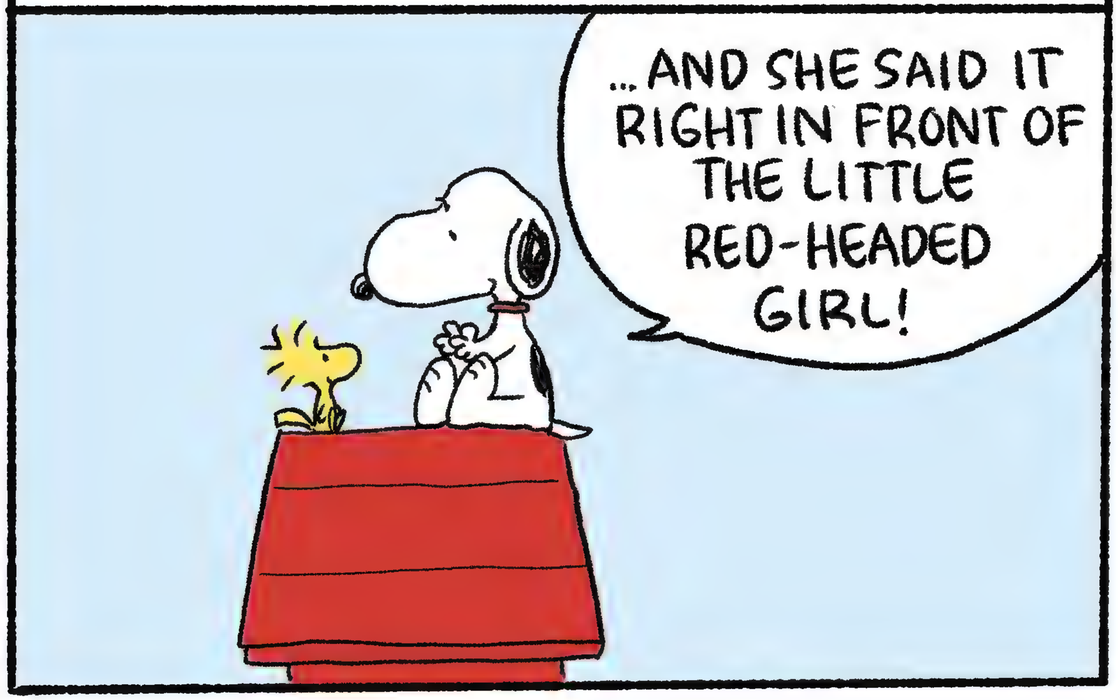
AFTER LUNCH, SPARKY AND PAIGE BID US GOODBYE.



THAT NIGHT, I WORRIED ABOUT HOW I'D RIBBED HIM.

SO I CALLED PAIGE, AND SHE REASSURED ME.

I LIKE TO IMAGINE HOW HE REMEMBERS OUR AFTERNOON.



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...so then coach told Chuck to warm the bench.

I tried to make him feel better by pitching a no-hitter,

FRIDAY NIGHT

5pm

SCHOOL DANCE FRIDAY NIGHT

but I think it just made him feel worse. Go figure.

HEY! IF MY STORY ISN'T CAPTIVATING, YOU CAN JUST SAY SO!

SCHOOL DANCE FRIDAY NIGHT

FORMAL ATTIRE REQUIRED

5pm

Look sir, a dance! A social function to look forward to!

SCHOOL DANCE FRIDAY NIGHT

FORMAL ATTIRE REQUIRED

5pm

...sir?

poke

!

FWUMP

SCHOOL DANCE? FAT CHANCE!

Hi Marcie, what's Peppermint Patty doing?

She's protesting the dance.

I think the dance will be fun. Maybe the red-haired girl will go with me.

I HEARD THAT!

Yes Principal Smith, I know protesting is against school policy.

Well, my problem is that dances are so old-fashioned: it forces boys to ask girls out, and the girls who don't get asked out feel bad about themselves.

Really? You'll think of a solution!?

Thank you!

SADIE HAWKINS DANCE
FRIDAY NIGHT
FORMAL ATTIRE REQUIRED
5PM
LADIES CHOICE!

Progress marches on.

Sir, are you still upset about the dance?

Yeah.

But you changed it so that girls get to ask the boys out...

That's not what I wanted. I wanted the dance cancelled.

Why?

... I don't want to wear a dress.

You don't have to go to the dance.

But I want to go to the dance. I just don't want to wear a dress.

So this whole ordeal was just about a dress?

Mostly, but it is unfair to force kids to date. It's a popularity contest!

What will you wear to the dance if you don't wear a dress?

I'm not sure yet...

TOWER OF THRIFT

... but I'll find it here!

OPEN

HOUSEWARES

BIG MUG

TOYS

DECORATIVE

BOYS CLOTHES

We're here!

Finally.

I didn't even know this place exists.

They have everything here! Suitcases, blenders, nightgowns, books...

Have you been here before, sir?

Of course! Where do you think I got this great shirt?!

Are you ready for me, Marcie?

FITTING ROOM

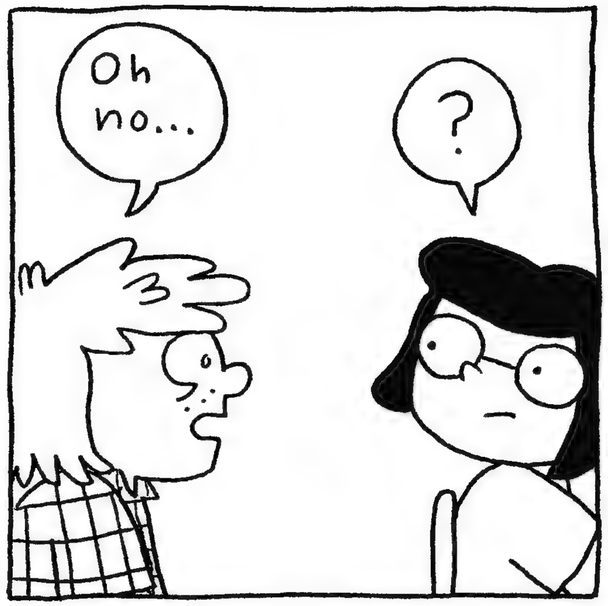
You bet!

TAH-DAH!

Pretty snazzy, eh? Can you believe someone got rid of an entire tuxedo in my size?

You're a knock out, sir.

So, now that you've got the perfect outfit, who are you taking to the dance?


Oh no...
?

In all my panic over wearing a dress, I forgot to find myself a date!

...There's still a few hours left...
THUNK

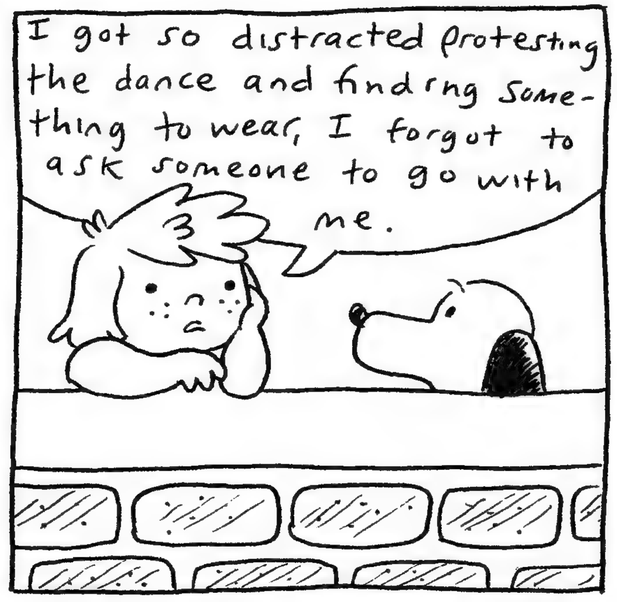
Sorry, I'm going with Sally.

I'm going with Lucy: she's holding my piano hostage until afterwards.

Thanks, but I'm already going with Marcie.

Even Charlie Brown has a date? I give up!
Hey!

Everyone has a date for the dance already.


I got so distracted protesting the dance and finding something to wear, I forgot to ask someone to go with me.

Do you wanna go to the dance with me?

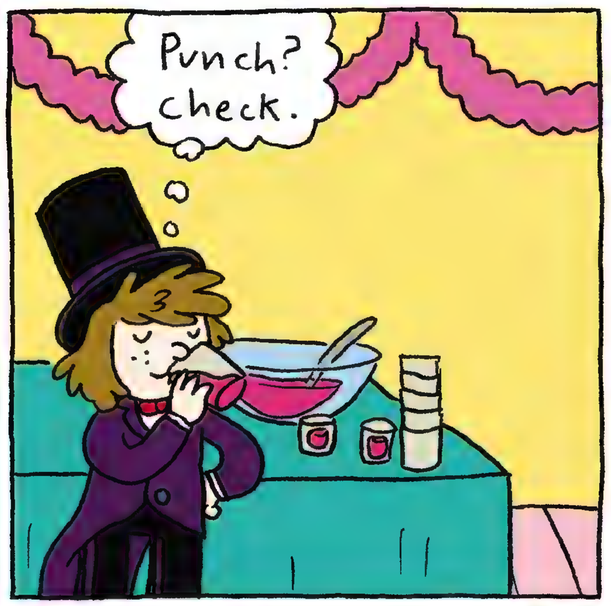
I'm going with the red-haired girl.

This is it, who cares if I don't have a date? I can still have fun.
DANCE TONIGHT

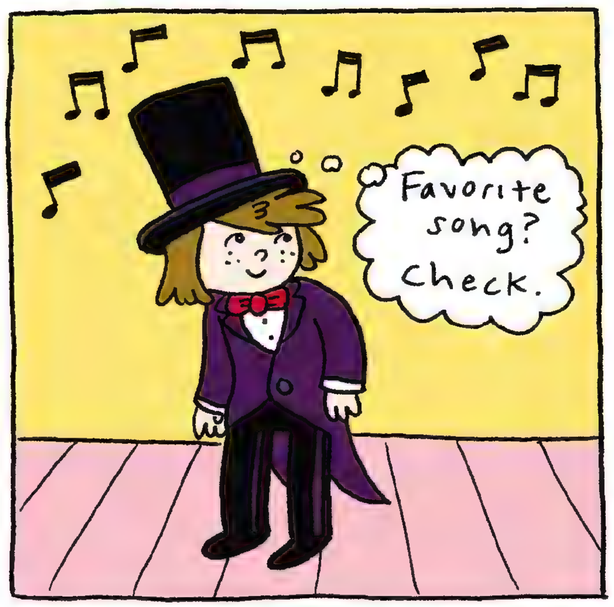
If anyone gives me guff, I'll just kick 'em in the shins!

BLAM

Hey, that's my old tuxedo!


Punch? check.

Dancing shoes?
check.


Favorite song? Check.

Let's do this.

Y'know what? I'm not really dancing alone
...I'm dancing with everyone!
She wears that tux better than I ever did.
FIN.

MEMORIES OF

PEANUTS

featuring

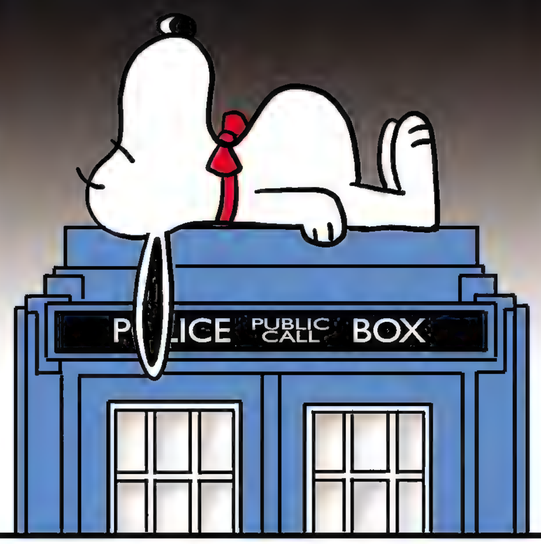
"Good ol' Sparky Schulz"

BY TOM TOMORROW

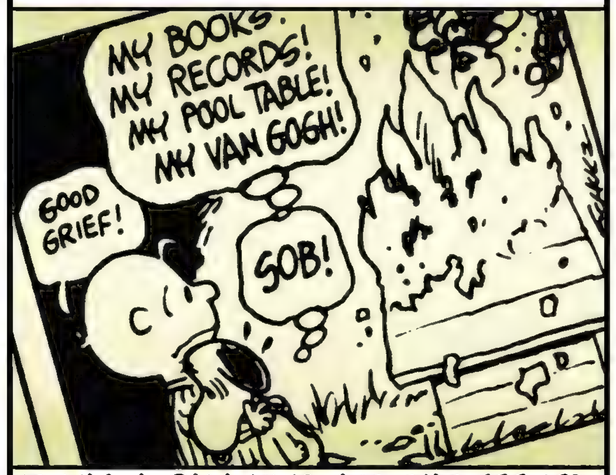
(TEXT ADAPTED FROM MY INTRODUCTION TO *THE COMPLETE PEANUTS 1991-1992*)

AS A YOUNG KID IN THE SIXTIES AND EARLY SEVENTIES, I THINK I HIT THE PERFECT SWEET SPOT WITH PEANUTS--OLD ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND THE HUMOR, WHILE YOUNG ENOUGH TO APPRECIATE THE WHIMSY.

YES, THE STRIP WAS ROOTED IN SADNESS AND FAILURE, BUT IT WAS ALSO MAGICAL--WITH A DOG WHO SPOKE TO US IN THOUGHT BALLOONS AND WHOSE DOGHOUSE (WE WERE TOLD) HAD CARPETING, A POOL TABLE, AND EVEN A VAN GOGH... APPARENTLY, IT WAS BIGGER ON THE INSIDE...



AT ONE POINT, SNOOPY'S DOGHOUSE WAS DESTROYED IN A FIRE, A STORYLINE INSPIRED WHEN SCHULZ'S STUDIO BURNED DOWN IN 1966. AND THAT WAS PEANUTS FOR YOU: A STRIP THAT SPUN HEARTBREAK INTO WRY HUMOR, A CARTOON ABOUT ANXIETY THAT VEERED FREQUENTLY INTO MAGICAL REALISM.

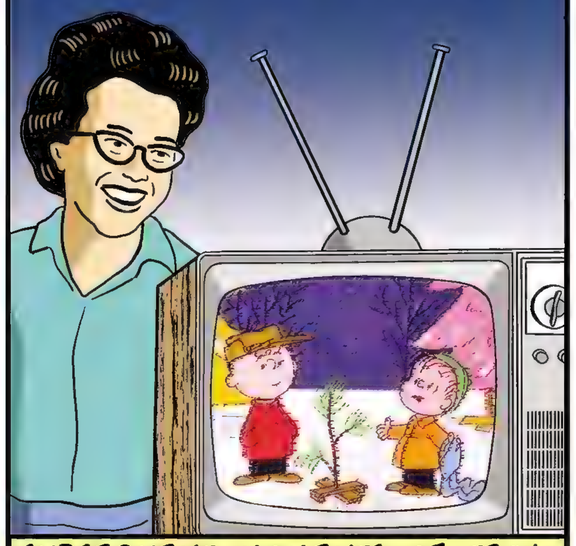


IT WAS A BALANCING ACT THAT SEEMED EFFORTLESS, AND AS ANY ARTIST OR WRITER WILL TELL YOU, THINGS THAT SEEM EFFORTLESS RARELY ARE.

THE YEAR THAT CHARLIE BROWN AND SNOOPY BECAME THE UNOFFICIAL MASCOTS OF APOLLO 10, I REMEMBER LAYING ON THE COUCH, SICK WITH THE FLU...

I STILL HAVE ONE OF THOSE DOLLS ON A SHELF IN MY STUDIO.

THE CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS SPECIAL WAS A YEARLY RITUAL IN OUR HOUSE. MY MOM TIMED THE PURCHASE OF OUR FIRST COLOR TELEVISION SET ONE YEAR SO I'D FINALLY BE ABLE TO WATCH THE SHOW IN COLOR.



SUBSEQUENT MOMENTS OF TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSITION PALE IN COMPARISON TO THAT MEMORY.

IN 1992, I WROTE CHARLES SCHULZ A FAN LETTER AND HE RESPONDED BY INVITING ME UP TO SANTA ROSA FOR LUNCH. IT WAS CRAZY--I WAS JUST SOME GOOFBALL ALTWEEKLY CARTOONIST, AND HE WAS ***CHARLES SCHULZ***--BUT AS IT TURNED OUT, WHEN IT CAME TO YOUNGER CARTOONISTS, HE WAS IMPROBABLY GENEROUS WITH HIS TIME.

HE EVEN GAVE ME AN ORIGINAL STRIP, WHICH HAS HUNG ON THE WALL OF EVERY PLACE I'VE LIVED SINCE THEN--SO I MEAN IT QUITE LITERALLY WHEN I SAY THAT A DAY RARELY PASSES THAT I DON'T THINK OF THE MAN AND HIS WORK.

YOU WERE--AND REMAIN--APPRECIATED, MR. SCHULZ.

"THE TELLING of FAULTS"
based on a true story

crab
crab
crab

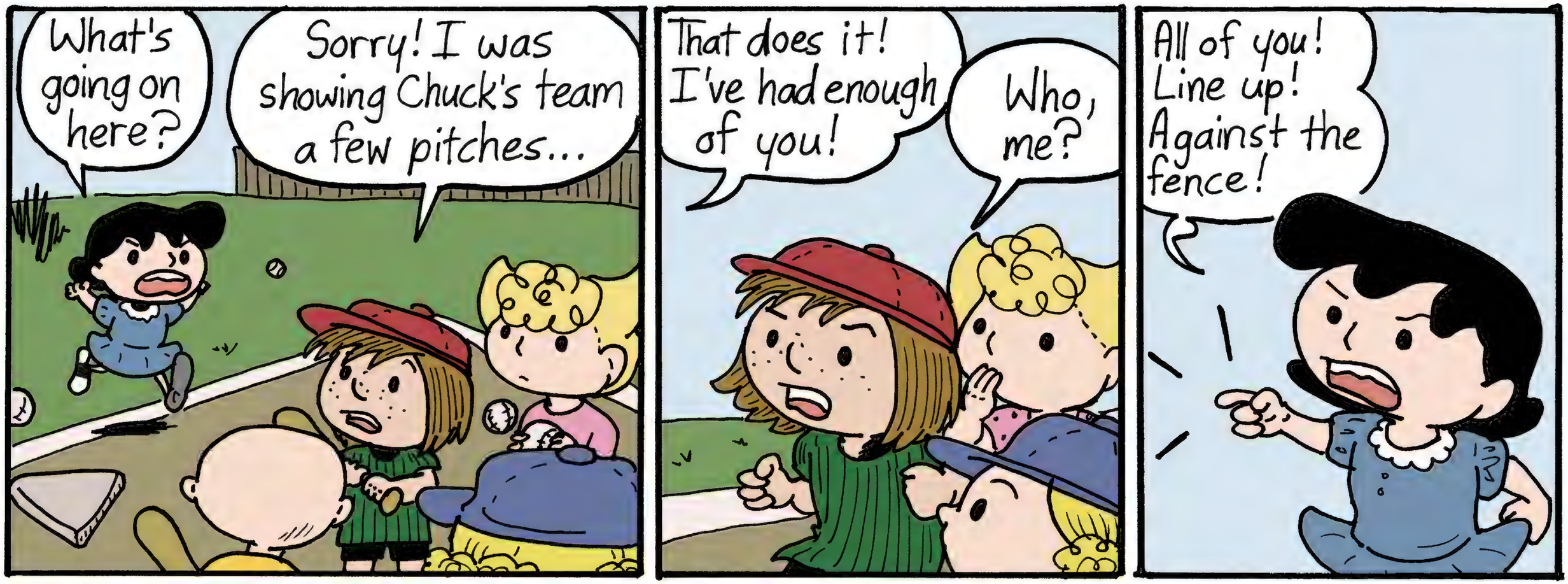
by Shaenon K. Garrity
colors by Pancha Diaz

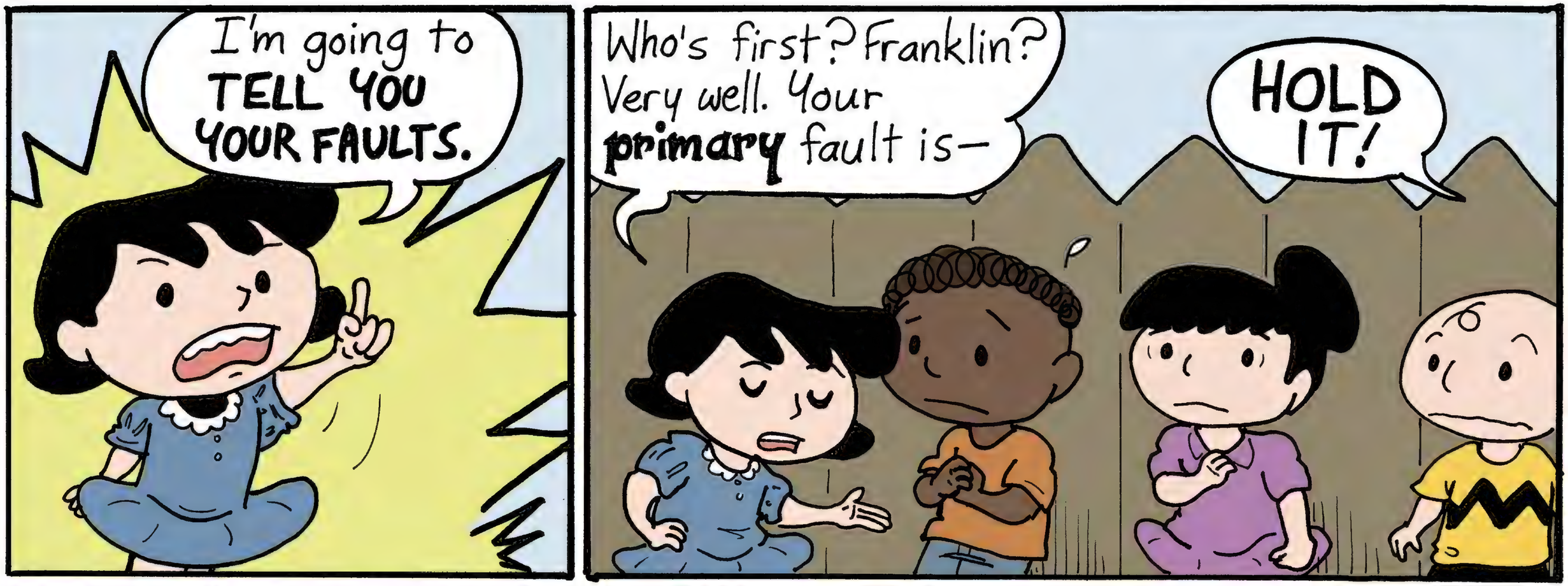
Boy, am I crabby today! But I won't take it out on anyone! I'm too good a person for that!

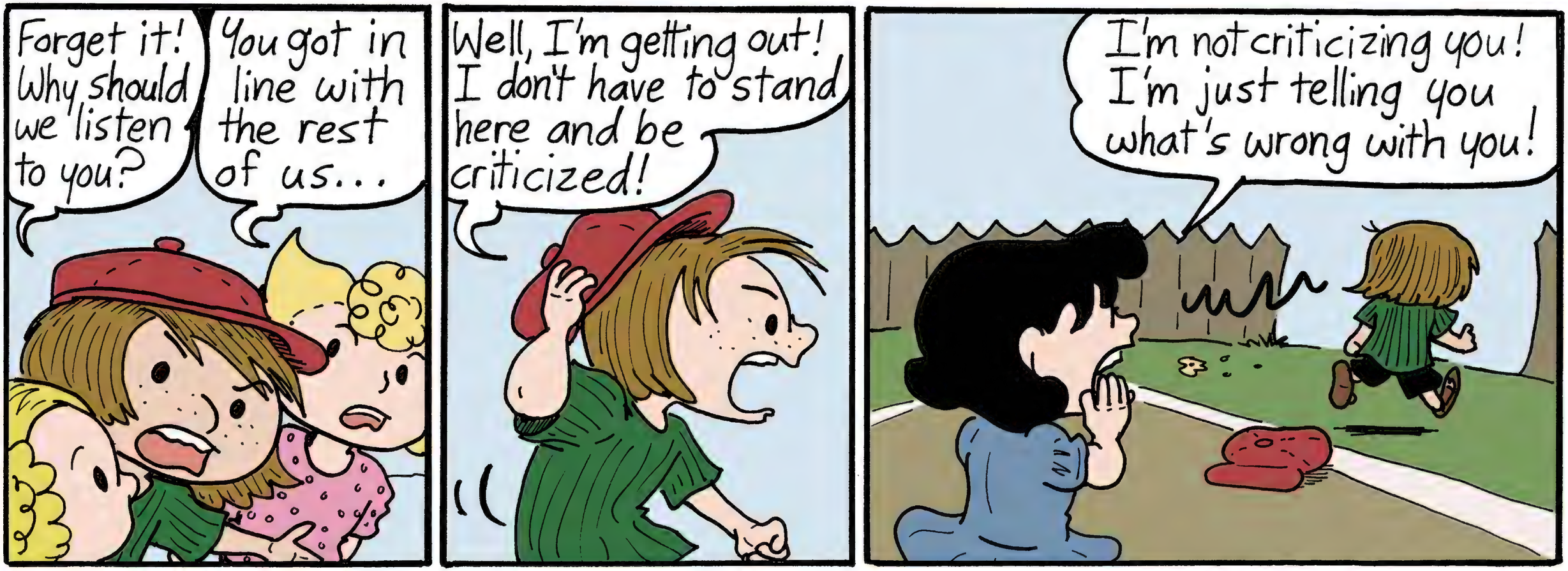
Unless the universe gives me a sign. I couldn't ignore a **sign.** But until then I'll be sweet and retiring and—

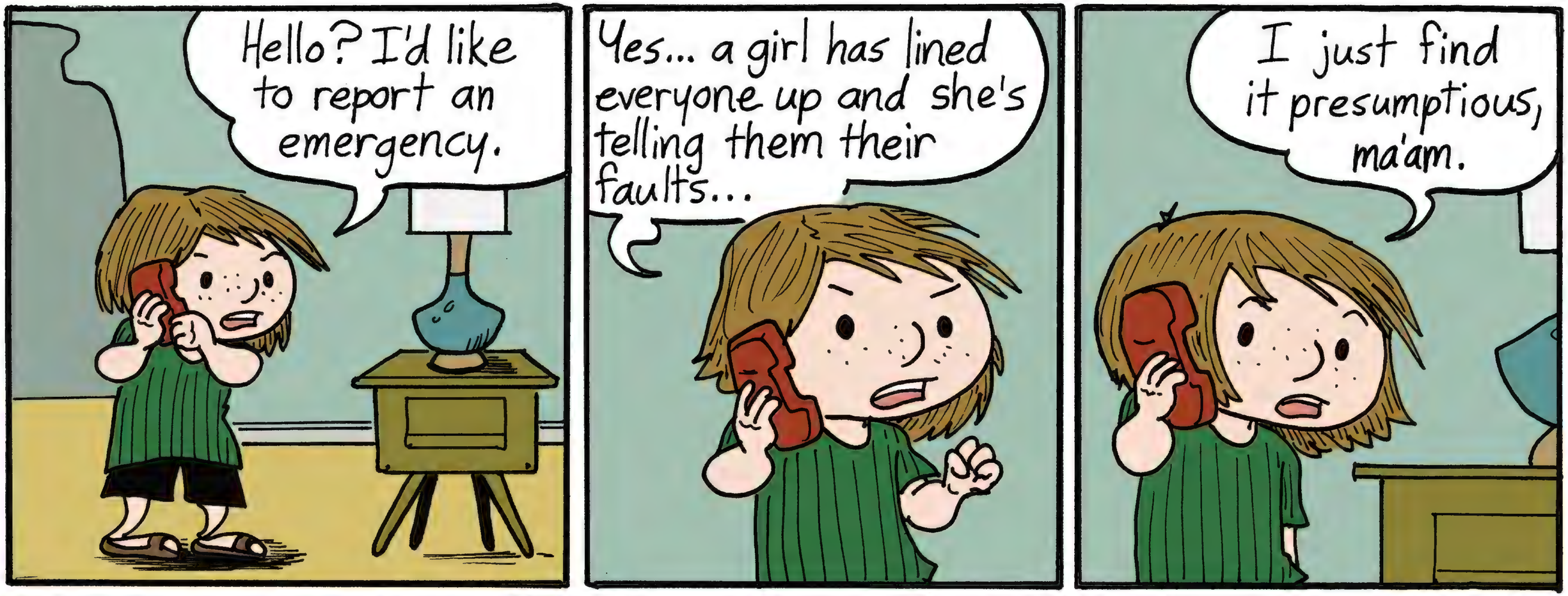
POW

Ah... thank you, universe.


What's going on here?
Sorry! I was showing Chuck's team a few pitches...
That does it! I've had enough of you!
Who, me?
All of you! Line up! Against the fence!
Yes, yes... I can see I've let this town get soft.
Time to whip you into shape.


I'm going to TELL YOU YOUR FAULTS.
Who's first? Franklin? Very well. Your primary fault is—
HOLD IT!


Forget it! Why should we listen to you?
You got in line with the rest of us...
Well, I'm getting out! I don't have to stand here and be criticized!
I'm not criticizing you! I'm just telling you what's wrong with you!

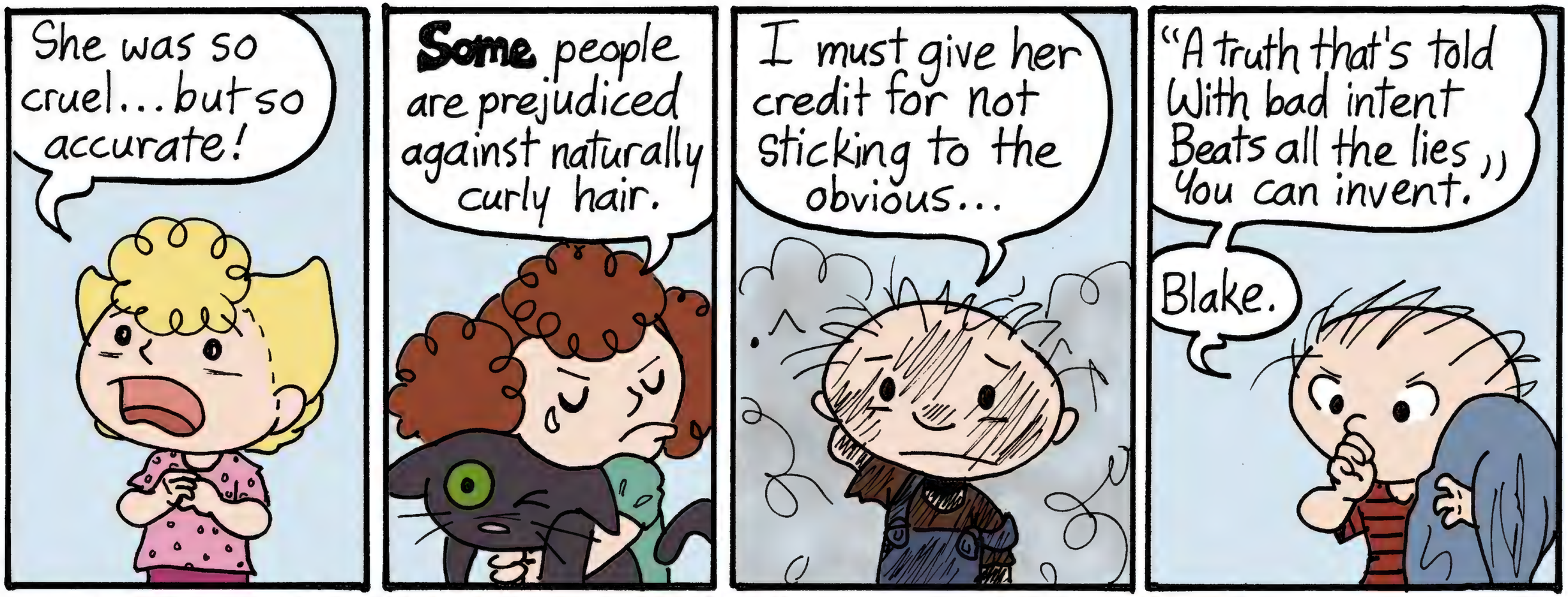

Hello? I'd like to report an emergency.
Yes... a girl has lined everyone up and she's telling them their faults...
I just find it presumptious, ma'am.
Nothing you can do, huh? You're sure?
... Oh. Well, thanks anyway.
What **else** is the Coast Guard around for?

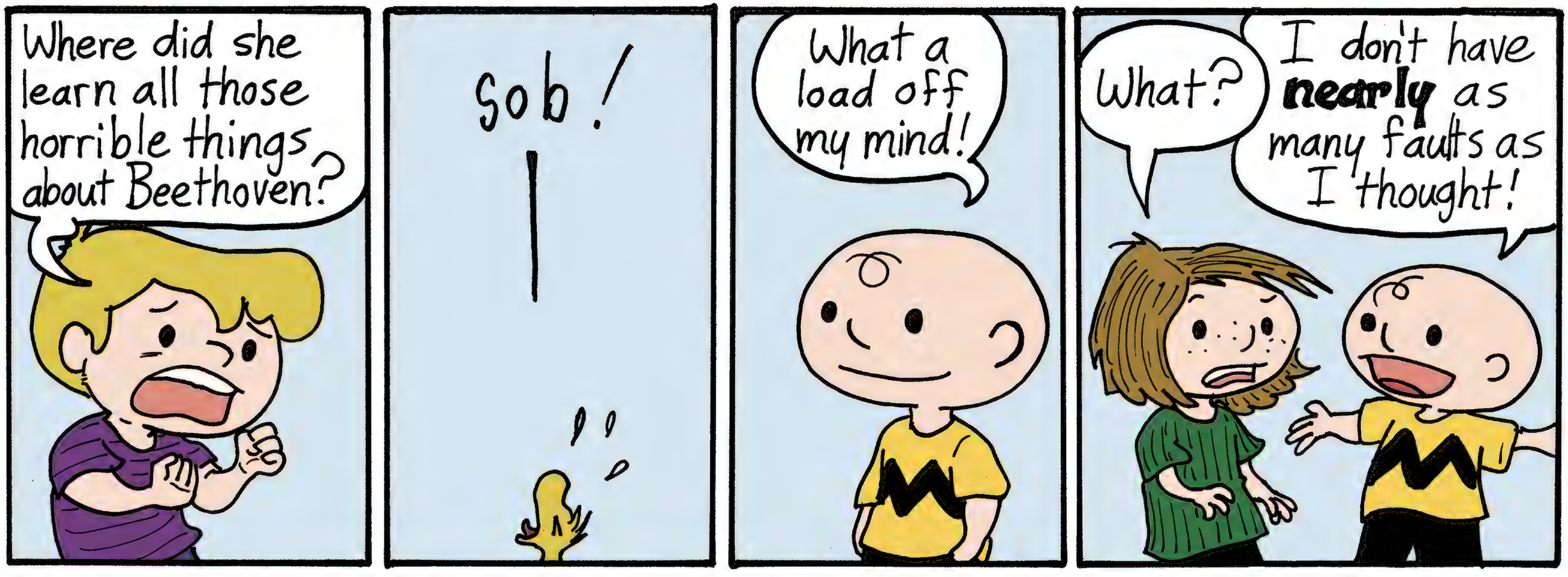
Guess it's up to me to stop this. Hope I'm not too late!

Maybe it wasn't so bad. Nobody likes hearing their faults, but it's just one opinion.

After all, how brutally honest could she **be?**

BAAHAAAAAAW


She was so cruel... but so accurate!
Some people are prejudiced against naturally curly hair.
I must give her credit for not sticking to the obvious...
"A truth that's told With bad intent Beats all the lies you can invent."
Blake.


Where did she learn all those horrible things about Beethoven?
Sob!
What a load off my mind!
What?
I don't have nearly as many faults as I thought!

So... um... What did Lucille say?
I can't repeat it! She was merciless!
We all made a solemn vow never to speak of this day again.
I think I'll fly a kite! Anyone want to join me?
Just be glad you were brave enough to walk away.
I **was** pretty brave, wasn't I?

Lucky you... now you'll never know your faults...

Yes, ma'am, she's asleep again...she was up all night consumed with existential anxiety.

Z!

Yesterday the rest of us were told our faults, and she can't stop wondering what hers are.

I offered my own suggestions, but they only aggravated her.

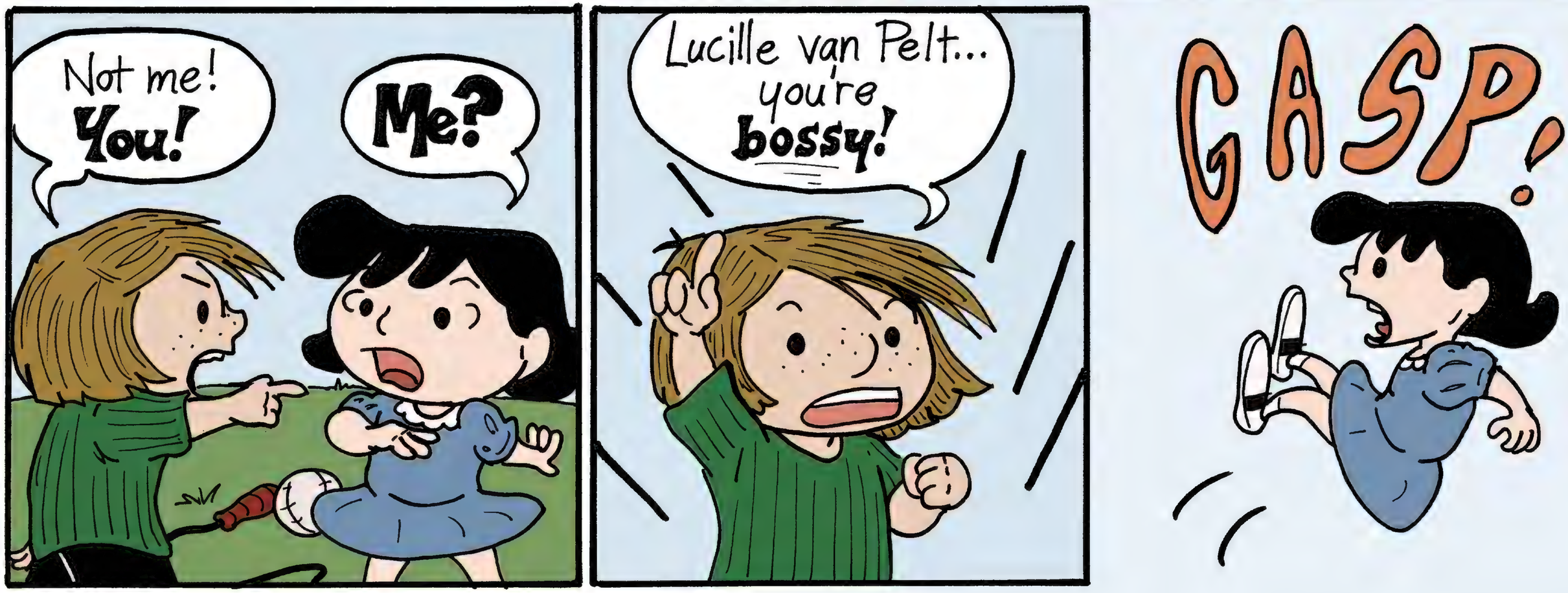
Nothing but the unvarnished truth will do. She wishes to face the abyss.

If you think about it, it's quite noble...

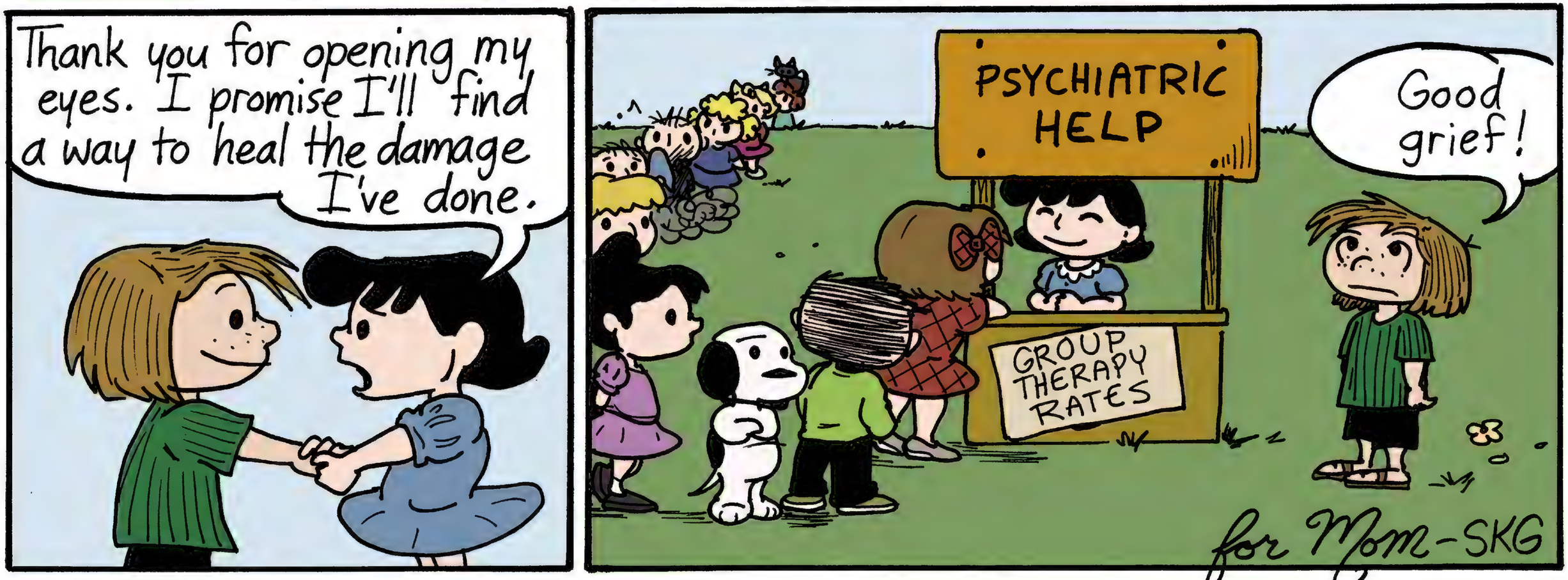
Yes, ma'am, making excuses for friends was one of **my** faults.

Z!

That's it! I can't take it anymore!
?
It's wrong for everyone else to have their faults told and one person get away scot-free.
Oh, is that all?
I'll be happy to tell you your faults. Category A, subsection I.i.—


Not me! You!
Me?
Lucille van Pelt... you're bossy!
GASP!

Me? Bossy? Tell me how I'm bossy! Tell me!
It isn't true!
... but it is! I can't deny it!
Bossy!
Wow... I didn't know how traumatic it can be to be told your faults.


Thank you for opening my eyes. I promise I'll find a way to heal the damage I've done.
PSYCHIATRIC HELP
GROUP THERAPY RATES
Good grief!
for Mom-SKG

„WEIRD„

MELANIE GILLMAN

FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, ADULTS HAVE USED THAT WORD FOR US.

Marcie! Your *friend* is here!

LIKE THEY'RE WARDING OFF A CURSE.

Will your *friend* be walking you home after school, too?

her best friend

such darling friends

friends from camp

Hi

Hi

been friends for ages

closest friend

friends

been friends practically forever

just friends

friends

friends

very close friends

nearly inseparable friends

KIDS USE DIFFERENT WORDS.

IN MY FAVORITE BOOKS, THE HEROINES ARE ALL CONFIDENT AND ABOVE REPROACH.

SO I TRY TO BE THE SAME.

A+

D-

uuuughh

PAT PAT

HA HA SNICKER HA HA PFFT HA HA SNICK HA HA HA HA SNRK HA HA HA HA PFFT HA HA SNRK

WOULD IT BE EASIER FOR HER IF SHE HAD BETTER STORIES?

SOMETIMES A STORY WILL SEEM TO FIT, BUT ONLY UP TO A CERTAIN POINT.

I CAN SEE MYSELF AS THE FEARLESS PRINCESS IN DISGUISE, HELD CAPTIVE IN THE DRAGON'S CAVE.

I PICK THE LOCK WITH A MAGIC HAIR PIN AND SNEAK PAST THE SLEEPING DRAGON.

OUTSIDE, A DASHING KNIGHT IS WAITING TO RIDE BACK TO THE CASTLE WITH ME.

WE'RE SUPPOSED TO KISS—

BUT—

AROUND HERE, I GET THE DISTINCT IMPRESSION THE STORY STOPS BEING WRITTEN FOR ME.

ONCE, I TRIED TO WRITE A DIFFERENT STORY MYSELF.

BUT NONE OF THE USUAL WORDS SEEMED TO FIT.

irlfriend
friend
friend
girlfr
riend
girlfriend
friend
irlfriend
friend

Do you ever wonder what we are?

What do you mean?

Like– what are you supposed to call this?

I wish...

we were allowed to make our own words.

Sometimes, I think it's like... what if we're both lady knights, and we roam all over the kingdom together, and we're always getting in trouble with, like, dragons and stuff, but we rescue each other too, and maybe one of us is a witch and the other is secretly an heir to the neighboring kingdom's throne–

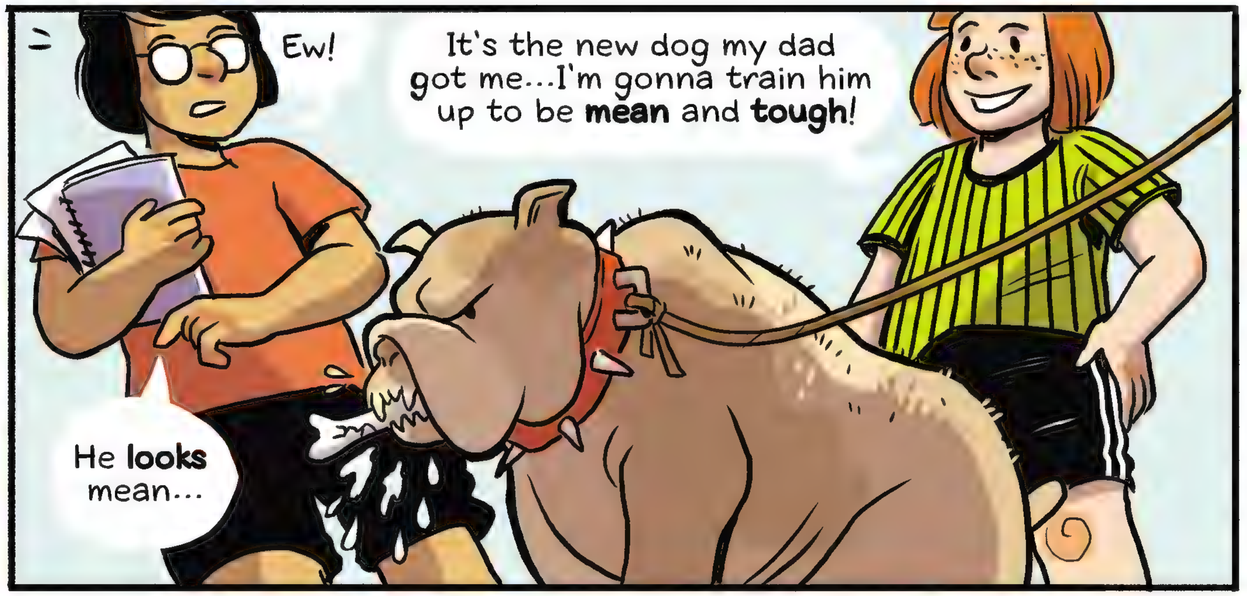
You really are a weird kid.

So are you, sir.

"Danger, Sir!"

by Molly Ostertag

Why did you want to go to your house, sir?
We have to get started on that book report...
That can wait, I wanna show you something! And don't call me 'sir'.



YES

You just get too excited!

You really should come work on your book report, sir...

rowf
rowf

Marcie! Danger is going after Snoopy!

What should we do?

Sir, I think Danger is ... a girl!

'Danger' is a good name for a girl dog, isn't it ...

PSYCHIATRIC HELP 5¢
SOMEONE CALLED YOU "SIR?" WHO CARES? ATLEAST NOBODY CALLS YOU "CRABBY."
SIGH...
THE DOCTOR IS IN
PAIGE 2015

FROM THE CONTRIBUTORS

When I was in 6th grade I was a weird kid. My parents took me to a psychiatrist, the old fashioned kind with a wood-paneled office and a shrink's couch. He asked me what I liked to do. I said I liked to draw comics. He said, will you draw me one? So I drew a four panel comic about my character Zero-man. He was egg-shaped and he flew through the air saying, "I am the wonderful, terrific, spectacular, etc…" then he crashed into a telephone pole. "…Zero-man." The shrink said, "Oh, do you like *Peanuts*?" I said, "Yeah." So he sent me home.

—Tony Millionaire

This story was terrifying for me at first. I felt enormous reluctance about drawing the *Peanuts* crew straight-on in an official capacity, without the shield of parody to hide behind. It was only after I figured out a way to look at the strip from an oblique angle that I started to feel comfortable about it. I salute those cartoonists in these pages who have been able to take on the strip itself in a way I did not feel able to do—you're far braver than I.

For me, the single greatest thing about *Peanuts*—the towering, inspirational central fact of its existence—is the fact that it was all the work of one cartoonist. Every line of dialogue, every shape delineated on the page, every hand-drawn letter, came out of one brain and was committed to paper by one hand. For fifty years.

Fifty. Years.

In a world where huge media corporations build intellectual properties by focus group and committee, where even relatively idiosyncratic creations are subject to all manner of commercial pressures, it's absolutely staggering and inspiring to me that Charles Schulz created one of the most beloved (and—let us not be coy about this—one of the most commercially successful) strips of all time simply by saying "me" every day for four panels as clearly and concisely as he knew how. "There it is," he seemed to say. "Take it or leave it."

—Roger Langridge

What can I say about my hero, and friend, Sparky? He and his magical, masterful, kind-hearted comic strip helped shape my life.

—Patrick McDonnell

The first time I saw *Peanuts* was in the Sunday newspaper comic strips. On Sundays, we would sit on the floor in the living room and read the funnies with my dad. My dad would give voices to all the characters. Charlie Brown always sounded like my dad. The more he would read, the harder he would laugh. I would laugh because my dad was laughing. Charlie Brown was hilarious! *Peanuts* quickly became one of my favorite comic strips. Later, when I learned how to read, I discovered that my dad was making up the words and jokes.

This was my first introduction into *Peanuts*.

I loved *Peanuts*. I loved the way they looked. I loved the humor. (Even if a lot of it in the beginning came from my dad. But, I think he got the gist.) I loved the way they were drawn. I loved *A Charlie Brown Christmas*. Snoopy made us laugh. I still look forward to watching it every Christmas season with my kids. I'm a fan.

Charles Schulz is awesome. He came up with something funny every day for generations. He has showed the world what it takes to be a famous cartoonist. He is THE role model for all cartoonists. He definitely inspired me in my famous cartoonist journey. His inspiration is felt in every comic I create. It's true. My *Patrick the Wolf Boy* even wears a reversed Charlie Brown shirt. AW YEAH HOMAGE!

—Art Baltazar

Peanuts was always different. When I was a kid, I read "real" comic books: not the Sunday funnies. But if I did happen to get a glimpse of the newspaper strips, there was something about Charles Schulz's *Peanuts* that always stood out. Charlie and Lucy and Snoopy were so real. They were like family. *Peanuts* always felt so real, even though it was seemingly so simply drawn as compared to the ultra-detailed

superhero comics I usually read. And, years later, when I became a cartoonist myself, I would come to employ a "simplistic" drawing style. *Peanuts* showed me how much humanity you could deliver with only a few lines.

So, for this piece I wanted to pay homage to Charles Schulz by filtering his characters through my own style. This is what Charlie and Snoopy might look like if they'd appeared in *Essex County* or *Sweet Tooth*, minus the antlers. Hopefully I managed to capture even just an ounce of the heart of the original strips. Thank you, Charles Schulz, and thank you, Charlie Brown.

—Jeff Lemire

Peanuts showed me the direction in which to take my talents and taught me what comprises great art. Lucy tore up a drawing Linus had made because it lacked artistic value. "No artistic value?" he replied, "I worked for forty-five minutes drawing that horse." To which she declared, "A true work of art takes at least an hour!" Wise words, indeed. That is why I rarely draw horses.

—Stan Sakai

Charles Schulz taught me that no matter how many rocks you are given in life, there is always a warm puppy to embrace. Thank you, Mr. Schulz, for your inspiration through creative simplicity.

—Julie Fujii

It's impossible for me to think of *Peanuts* without remembering my childhood. One of my earliest Christmas gifts was a plush Snoopy—as big as me, at the time—whose short fur was worn thin from love by the time I was old enough to form lasting memories. Some of the first books I read were comic strip compilations like *Happiness Is A Warm Puppy*. My older sister wrote her pen pals on *Peanuts* stationary; we used to listen to the "Snoopy's Christmas" record on our portable hi-fi. During the holidays, I watched the TV Guide to make sure not to miss the Charlie Brown cartoon specials; in February, my classmates and I gave each other candy hearts stuffed into *Peanuts* valentines. And of course, I read *Peanuts* in the funny pages every Sunday.

So when I think of *Peanuts*, I think of my first home: a small town in Iowa, not unlike the Midwestern suburb where Charlie Brown lived, with broad lawns and a horizon free of dramatic features like mountains or skyscrapers. I think of hot summers when the grass got crispy in the sun, frozen winters when the snow was deep enough to dig a tunnel, and trick-or-treating in a costume made from an old sheet and a paper plate. Those are the memories that fed the creation of this illustration: Charlie Brown and Snoopy, a kid and his friend, contemplating the world together on a quiet afternoon.

—Colleen Coover

Like comic books, Charlie Brown and the *Peanuts* gang were ever-present my entire life. We had the toys, the coloring books, the Hallmark cards, the little paperback collections, and of course, the daily strip. We always looked forward to the TV specials with intense ritualistic enthusiasm before the days of VCRs, DVDs, and DVRs.

Charles Schulz's creations were simply a part of life. Like trees, mountain ranges, rivers, Lakes, the ocean, and the sky, they just always...were. I remember how unthinkable it was that he was calling it quits after fifty years. And then, as if he chose his time, he passed away. But, though always there, he was never taken for granted. Not in our house. His work was always cherished, referenced, and beloved.

And it always will be.

—Mike Allred

Charles Schulz was my hero. For me, he was the very definition of cartoonist in every aspect, from work to lifestyle. His strong personal ethics made an indelible impression on me. But I echo many cartoonists today when I say the

most powerful influence he had on me was "world building"—my words, not his. *Peanuts* was a fully formed world, and a place you'd rather be. That's a magic I've spent my career trying to reproduce.

The last time I saw Charles Schulz was December 14, 1999. "The Today Show" aired his final interview and Schulz described his regret over never letting Charlie Brown kick the football. "What a dirty trick," he said with tears in his eyes. Two months later, my hero passed away. His final strip appeared the next day. Schulz was a master of timing.

Fifteen years pass and I am invited to contribute to this anthology. "Any ideas?" says the email. "YES!" I reply. "Can I have dibs on the football gag?" (tense wait for reply) "I CAN?! THANK YOU! I know EXACTLY what I want to do!!"

This is for Sparky.

—Terry Moore

I love everything about *Peanuts*. There was always something about the Holiday Special's very simple color palette that perfectly defined the atmosphere of that season for me. The Halloween and Thanksgiving ones remain the most reminiscent piece of my childhood growing up in Georgia, and I seek out that nostalgia every chance I get.

—Dustin Nguyen

I never met Sparky. Not the man. But I knew him through his work. Everyone did.

I grew up in a gritty London suburb. Half a world away from Santa Rosa, California or St. Paul, Minnesota. Far removed from baseball games, summer camps, taped hockey sticks, and sledding. The closest thing I saw to a beagle was a flea-bitten mangy mutt that used to open our trash bin looking for food every evening. I'd never heard of fussbudgets, blockheads, ophthalmologists or Willie Mays. To be honest I don't think I'd even seen a pumpkin in real life. But I learned them all, and more, through reading *Peanuts* books.

I suppose in many ways it was inevitable that I would move to California and work as a cartoonist. Sparky was everything to me and literally drew me a "map" to get here. His sublime lines. His exquisite lettering. His cast of characters, with different personalities and the world he created with them. I wanted to live in that world. And just like visiting New York or Los Angeles after seeing them in so many movies, visiting the United States of America after reading *Peanuts* for fifteen years made it magic. And what Sparky did was magic.

—Jonathan Lemon

Before I discovered comic books, and before the internet made the nerd-world small, I had the comic strips in the newspaper (remember those?). That's where Charlie Brown lived: the kid who had it worse than I did. Not that I had it bad, but what did I know; I was a kid.

My friends weren't pulling footballs away when I tried to kick them and my dog respected me, but Chuck let me know I'd get by when things didn't go my way—that there was someone else who didn't have the courage to talk to that red-haired girl. He was someone to relate to that my parents already knew and that we could share: a family friend.

It's been years since I've picked up the funnies, but he'll always be welcome in my home and he's never left my heart (good grief, Dan).

—Dan Hipp

Much of my time over the last decade has been occupied with a historical adventure graphic novel series, *The Crogan Adventures*, which initially sprang from a couple of generic historical genre characters that regularly found their way into my sketchbooks: a World War I flying ace, and a French Foreign

legionnaire. I was drawn to these characters and these genres despite never having seen or read narrative examples of them, possibly because of it. This familiarity puzzled and captivated me. I chalked it up to having absorbed a lot of stories that had been influenced by the swashbucklers and war films of the '30s, '40s, and '50s.

It wasn't until I began researching and working on the comic included in this collection that I realized my awareness of and affection for these genres stemmed not from some cultural consciousness or shared narrative memory, but from a handful of *Peanuts* strips from mid-1960s that presented pastiches of the two genres.

For someone who has spent a lot of time reflecting on my influences, this is a glaringly obvious and baffling oversight. I'd always assumed that Schulz's impact on me was an abstraction, an affection for the medium that carried with it the approbation of my family (they respected *Peanuts*, *Peanuts* was a comic, ergo, comics were a respectable livelihood), but it turns out to have been quite practical, coloring the direction that my work, and life, has taken. Given that I like that direction, I owe Schulz an immeasurable debt. And you know what? You might, too. Schulz touched on thousands of subjects during the fifty-year run of good ol' Charlie Brown; it's entirely possible that you, like I, may have been steered by one of them without ever realizing it.

—Chris Schweizer

It's your fault, Charlie Brown!

If it wasn't for you, I may never have been tricked into drawing comics. When I was little I loved to draw. When I found the Sunday funnies I thought, these *Peanuts* characters are easy to sketch, they're just circles.

That's when you pulled the ball away from me.

My first few attempts ended in utter failure. *Peanuts* may have looked easy to render but there was a complexity to their design. The more I tried to copy them, the more I was drawn into their world. I soon discovered how real these simply drawn kids could be. They were funny, acerbic, and often poignant. I have been trapped in the world of comics ever since.

It's your fault, Charlie Brown!

—Frank Cammuso

Peanuts was the first comic I remember reading as a kid, and it was being read a ton of *Peanuts* by my parents that made me want to draw comics as early as grade school. I really love that even though it's really funny and sweet, Charles Schulz was absolutely aware of how kids aren't happy all the time. Being a kid is just as frustrating and confusing as being an adult is! So when Charlie Brown is constantly struggling and failing to kick the football or talk to the girl he likes or fly his kite, I feel weirdly comforted. Everyone feels like they're constantly messing up as they attempt to do the things they dream about doing. But there's still an overwhelming sense of optimism in how Charlie Brown keeps trying anyway, and in how all the kids have good hearts, even if they don't always get along. Plus: It's really funny and the art is so perfect. And Snoopy is the coolest dog that ever lived.

—Megan Brennan

Look at pre-war comic strips, and then look at everything that came after Schulz, and you'll see what a monumental impact this man had on the art form. With the skills of a haiku poet, he invested the art form with more power by simplifying and clarifying the line, editing out the chaff, and leaving infinitely more room for heart.

Like every child that ever read it, I loved *Peanuts*. I loved it for the warmth, the adventure, and the sense that I was not alone in this world—with all my

fears, hopes, and anxieties. This was a strip that celebrated what it meant to be imperfect: And it did so with the warmth that told you everything was going to be okay. That it was all going to work out.

Schulz showed me the strength in writing with your guard down. He showed me what was possible with the comic strip. And more than anything else, Schulz showed me how to be a cartoonist—on and off the page. That is a gift I will always be thankful for.

—Dave Kellett

Peanuts was my gateway drug.

Schulz taught me how to read, the language of cartooning, what a Sopwith Camel was, World War I, psychiatry, co-dependency, unrequited love, and the Great Pumpkin.

I couldn't get enough of the comic strip via the few collections that I possessed as a kid, so I would go to the local department store and hang out and read more *Peanuts*. I got hooked on libraries because I would hit everyone in town looking for another Charles Schulz book I hadn't seen before.

I wanted to make sure I got in a few of my favorite things with my tribute comic: "Good grief", "fussbudget", Snoopy, the little red-haired girl, and Franklin. Having the tableau of the *Peanuts* universe to choose from is like an all-you-can-eat buffet at a Michelin-starred French bistro! Merci, Mr. Schulz!

—Keith Knight

Charles Schulz created with *Peanuts* a world immediately relatable and loveable and simultaneously out of reach. Not because it was without fault or flaw. But because in spite of its flaws, it was a world of innocence. One whose characters sought to understand themselves and the world around them and were unashamed of the emotions that understanding brought. *Peanuts* is a glimpse into a time and place in middle America that I'd like to believe actually existed at some time. If it ever did, it was most certainly before my time. And as time rolls on, Schulz's dream world doesn't lose its relevance but I think becomes ever more so as it reminds us of things lost, precious things held to, and more precious things still unattained. Charles Schulz, Charlie, Snoopy, Lucy, Linus, Patty and the rest of the gang don't just teach us how to laugh at ourselves, they teach us how to live with ourselves.

—Ryan Sook

It's easy to take for granted something you've never had to question as to how it got there. *Peanuts* has always been a part of my life, whether I wanted it to be or not. Strips were Xeroxed and passed out in my Sunday school classes. A certain cartoon dog selling life insurance on television. "Linus and Lucy" played in every department store come December. Even during my Broadway musical phase in high school a burned copy of *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* just appeared one day. The cultural impact of Schulz's strip has grown so large that it is almost impossible to comprehend; blown out to a proportion the human eye can't all take in at once.

As someone who draws comics full time, it can be hard to equate Schulz's work, and successes, with my own life as a cartoonist. It wasn't until I read a stack of the Fantagraphics published collections when I was in college, filled with those early exciting strips that have been forgotten under the cultural landslide, did it make some sense. They aren't all successful and many are already outdated (coonskin caps, anyone?), but it's amazing to have the chance to humanize something as large as *Peanuts*. We're in an age where most cultural properties have been remade, distorted, stripped of context and regurgitated back at us. But you can look at those early strips and be reminded that everything has an origin. Even massive empires begin with just a pair of hands, which is nice to be reminded of after sitting for a few hours drawing quietly, alone.

—Jeremy Sorese

"I'll never be Andrew Wyeth."
"No problem is so big, or so complicated that it can't be run away from."
"I think I'll flap my arms and fly to the moon."
"I love mankind. It's people I can't stand."
"Am I buttering too loud for you?"

All of the above quotes have popped into my head at various points over the last few days, perfectly summing up an event or moment in the way that only true poetry can. All of them are punchlines from *Peanuts* comic strips. When it comes to pop culture of the past 70 years or so, only the Beatles have had an impact on par with Charles Schulz. Each transformed not only their individual fields, shaking them to the core and remaking them in their own image, but they also accomplished the far more difficult trick of transforming the inner lives and hearts of the millions of people who loved them.

When I was a kid, I told people I wanted to be a cartoonist when I grew up, but what I really wanted to be was Charles Schulz. I worked hard...as hard as I possibly could, and eventually I became a professional cartoonist. With the publication of this book, I even got to draw *Peanuts!* How cool is that?!

But you know what? No matter how hard I try...I'll never be Charles Schulz. Sigh.

Am I buttering too loud for you?

—Jimmy Gownley

When I was a kid I read all the comics in the newspaper. I mean ALL of the comics. Even the ones that were the soap opera-ish ones, even the ones that made no sense, even the ones that weren't drawn that well. All of them.

And this was in the newspaper. Tangible. Actual paper. Every day, I would ride my bike to 7-11 and buy all the different papers there for that day. I'd step outside and parse out the comics sections in each paper, then I'd dump the rest of the news into the trash. I know, I know, wasteful...but not if you only valued the comics. Not if your dream was to be a cartoonist. Not if you wanted to smile and laugh at the gags, pour over the artist's drawings and spend time with all the characters in those little boxes. Especially, if you wanted to spend time inside the four little boxes containing good ol' Charlie Brown and Snoopy.

I cherished the comics section in the newspapers because Charles Schulz's *Peanuts* was at the top. Not just literally at the top of the newspaper on Sunday, it was at the top of my favorite comics. Still is. As a hopeful cartoonist, I loved the artwork in *Peanuts* for its style...the supremely appealing charming designs and unique simplicity. But, Schulz's creation is deceptive in its simplicity. It may look sparse, but it's deep. And truly, my heart belonged to it because of the heart that was put into it...the charm, warmth, individuality, humor, gags, and heart of characters that came from one of the greatest cartoonists ever. *Peanuts* gave us the most wonderful kind of cartoon creation: characters to care about. To be friends with. To love and root for.

If there's anything I'm sad about, it's that I never got to meet Schulz personally. I would've loved to have had the chance to sit and talk and listen to him. However, then I remind myself that in a way...I got to do that every day that I read *Peanuts*.

—Mike Kunkel

People enjoy the blues.

At first brush, it seems strange. The blues are mourning. Lament. But setting sorrow to music creates a paradox. The very effort and beauty of rendering the lament as a song defies the resignation and starkness of its subject, even as it communicates them like no other form could. According to music critic Alex Ross, "A blues is sensual, knowing, tough; it's full of resilience, even as it heeds the power of fate. The gesture of lament annuls itself and engenders its opposite."

This is the secret all great artists have understood: tragedy is a function of hope. What makes a tragedy tragic is we believe there's a better way for things to go. Hope. Without this belief that things could be better, tragedy wouldn't move us. It would be just another series of events. And if things *could* be better, then things *can* be better.

Charles Schulz was a great artist.

Comedy is basically just tragedy with a happy ending. A series of unfortunate events interrupted by a fortunate one. This is what J.R.R. Tolkien called the "eucatastrophe." The good catastrophe. The good grief.

Peanuts is a churn of unrequited desire, social anxiety, and the gulf between "could be" and "is." But it wears its hope on its sleeve and that's why it makes us laugh. Charlie Brown may appear to be a punch line, or even a punching bag, but he's also a man of great character. He's Ross's resilience incarnate: every spring he gets back on the pitcher's mound, every summer he flies another kite, every fall he tries to kick another football. He shows us how to triumph by being defeated.

This is why I love *Peanuts*. My personal favorite strip has Peppermint Patty taking a true/false test. She gets more and more emphatic, more and more carried away, finally standing on her seat and shouting, "If the Lord is willing and the creeks don't rise!"

But *Peanuts* has taught me that, even if the Lord's not willing and the creeks do rise…well, it can be a good catastrophe.

—Caleb Monroe

My introduction to *Peanuts* wasn't through newspapers. It wasn't even through the TV specials. It was from a little series of books back in the '80s called, *Charlie Brown's 'Cyclopedia*. You see, growing up a Navy brat, we were constantly moving. Because of this, we never had newspaper subscriptions, but my parents didn't want us growing up without *Peanuts*. So when I was very little, my mom purchased the 'cyclopedias from the corner market to take with us as we trekked across the country. To this day, only one book survived. Barely. But whenever I see it, or even think about it, it brings me happiness. Kids who move a lot, tend to rely on their possessions to help cope with that difficulty. For me, happiness is a worn puppy…book.

—Lucas Turnbloom

As a kid I loved *Peanuts* for the funny characters, the funny gags, and the dog.

As I got older I fell more deeply in love with the strip because of Charles Schulz's brilliant cartooning. His line, his lettering, the ability to convey motion and speed and a wide range of effects in ink on paper. So much expressed in so few lines, it all looked so simple and effortless in print and yet that signature magic is missing when the characters are drawn by even the best mimics. Schulz's mastery of the form went beyond drawing, he excelled at concept and character, pacing, dialogue, set-up, and payoff. He knew how to milk an idea or gag for all it was worth, then when the well went dry, he would create another. And another. And he was funny as hell. It makes my stomach hurt just imagining trying that balancing act for a month, let alone five decades.

What's fascinated me about the strip in recent years is how dark it can get, how surreal Schulz's world is, and how early on in the run those elements started to creep into the panels. Charlie Brown lives in a nameless town populated by unseen adults, precocious children who age selectively and develop near-*Village of the Damned* abilities, humanoid dogs, predatory trees and suicidal school buildings. The physical laws of nature don't always apply. Things are not always what they appear to be on the surface.

On the one hand, we are told "Happiness Is Warm Puppy", but we are also told that "Depression is a Dead Kite".

Human isolation, loneliness, shame, guilt, anxiety, paranoia, fear. The feeling that you're worthless, that nothing matters, that nobody cares. The feeling of utter helplessness, of never knowing the truth, of trying and always failing, of being doomed. This is the shadow over *Peanuts*. It's pretty terrifying stuff.

I think *Peanuts* was the darkest strip to ever appear in the Sunday Funnies. And I think this darkness was present from the very beginning. The first, famous *Peanuts* strip ends with a seething Shermie expressing his utter hatred for Charlie Brown. The cute set up pays off with an unexpected outburst of negative emotion, slapping the reader upside the head like one of Lucy's roundhouse punches.

Schulz was willing to go there, all the way down there, to dark places, and make us laugh while he explored them. I mean, come on, what kind of person gives a kid a rock on Halloween? And what kind of person thinks up such a bizarre, spiteful, mean-spirited gag like that? It's moments like that where *Peanuts* veers from a straight-up gag strip into Kafka territory. And it's a mark of Schulz's genius that he was able to sugar-coat so many bitter pills and make the entire world happily swallow them.

Charles Schulz was the world's pencil pal, writing to us every day for fifty years about the joys and worries and even fears of life as he saw them. He wrote with humor, imagination and compassion, as well as a gracefulness rarely found in any medium. "THAT'S ART!", as Lucy once yelled, bowling Linus over with the brute force of her vocal chords.

That's *Peanuts*. Long may it live.

—Evan Dorkin

As a kid, the legacy of Charles Schulz was all around me—I grew up in Santa Rosa, California, the same city Schulz lived in for most of his career. The Schulz Museum and Snoopy Ice Arena were a regular part of my life. After he passed away, statues of Snoopy and Charlie Brown were put up all over town. I remember watching the holiday specials, seeing the musical(!) and owning the comic collections as a kid—but I don't think I actually "got" the humor of these cute, world-weary children until I was much older. While researching this project, I was reminded again just how funny, fresh and smart these comics are. Certain jokes from the '50s strips seem like they were written today. It's always inspiring when someone can find great success while staying true to themselves, and I consider myself lucky to have grown up in a place that celebrates that legacy.

—Derek Charm

The *Peanuts* character I model myself after in my story is Naomi. Haven't heard of her? Naomi is the last character Charles Schulz introduces, and she appears in just nine strips from October 1998. She wears dungarees, likes dogs, and feeds Spike pudding. I thought, "She's a good match," as I split my ham sandwich with my ninety-pound Collie mix. I needed to find peripheral characters in the *Peanuts* bunch, because, as you'll see from the story, a lot of the main ones are taken.

To create this piece, I'd paste a real Schulz character on the left side of the page, then try to draw that same character right next to it in my own hand. As I was doing it, I thought, "Why does this feel so familiar?" Then I remembered I'd do the same thing in the fifth grade, drawing and redrawing Snoopy, trying to get him right. It is as hard now as it was then!

A favorite question of mine is to ask people which mix of *Peanuts* characters they think best represents them. For me, it is Peppermint Patty, Marcie, Snoopy, Lucy, and Pigpen.

—Hilary Price

There's only so much ground you can cover in a comic strip, especially a kid strip, before you hit a patch that looks awfully familiar. The neighborhoods, the small anxieties & triumphs, the schoolyard. The specifics of the route home are well-trodden, so established, that if you're Charles Schulz, and you've been at this drawing board for 50 years and the footprints are yours and every trail too. Which makes it hard for us latecomers.

—Richard Thompson

There is arguably no comic with a longer legacy than *Peanuts*; it ran in newspapers across globe for 50 years, and still continues in syndication long after Schulz's retirement and death. Basically, Charles Schulz created the standard on which almost every newspaper comic strip has been measured. So, was it an honor to be asked to contribute to this tribute to the endurance of the *Peanuts* comic strip? Yes, very much so. It was a stressful, anxiety-inducing honor, because with a comic strip that three generations grew up reading, legacy is a BIG DEAL. According to Wikipedia there are 17,897 *Peanuts* strips, and I'm going to level with you guys, I haven't read them all. Heck, I probably haven't even read half of them.

But in the late '80s, comic strip collections were basically all that I wanted to check out of the library, and I read every *Peanuts* book I could get my hands on. You can see the influence of Schulz's cartooning in my own work; the way that his comics were more about expressive gestures and faces than they were about action (let's face it, those kids hardly had legs). I wanted to pay tribute to the most long-standing tomboy character in all existence, Peppermint Patty, because growing up as a tomboy myself, there weren't too many characters in media that I could really relate to. So hopefully those of you are well-versed in *Peanuts* lore will find my addition to the character arc fitting: as an autobiographical cartoonist, I basically put myself in her shoes (even though I've never been too fond of sandals).

—Liz Prince

I think a single line really sums it up for me:

Charles Schulz taught me to love this art form.

—Tom Tomorrow

My mother is Lucy. Growing up in Pittsburgh in the 1950s, she was the leader of the neighborhood kids, instructing them each afternoon on what the day's games would be. She even played Lucy in her high-school play. Which she wrote herself.

I learned to read, as plenty of kids did, from the funny pages. I identified with brainy and put-upon Linus, with introverted Marcie, with Peppermint Patty's clumsy, puppy-like efforts to be loved. Maybe I felt the most like Linus, because I had a security blanket—a tattered old crib sheet printed with toadstools—and snuggled with it until well past the age it might have been cute.

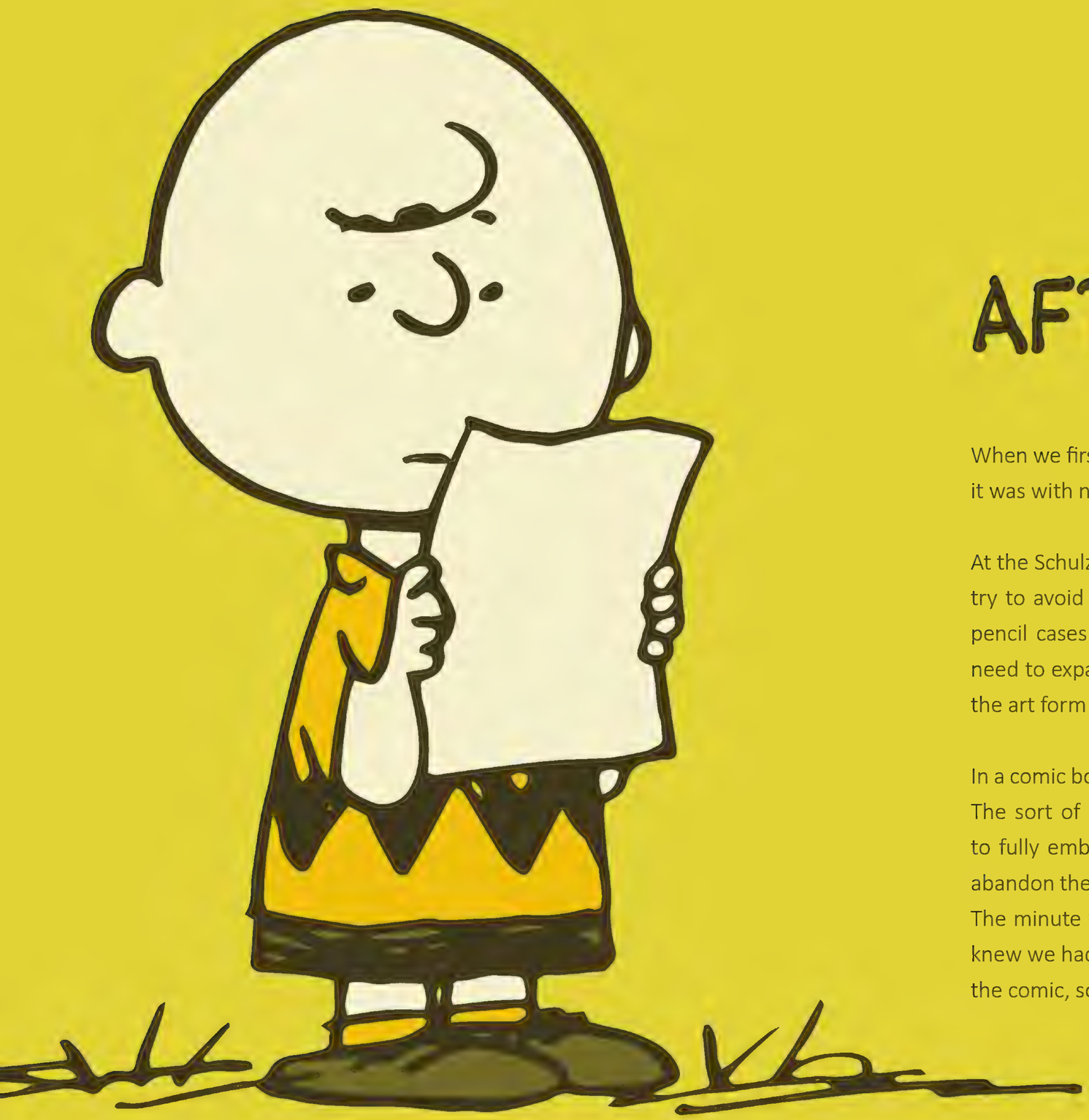
I named the security blanket "Lucy." Because everyone needs a little bossiness.

"The Naming of Faults" is inspired by an oft-told story from my mother's childhood. As soon as I was approached to draw a *Peanuts* story, or at least once I'd stopped hyperventilating with excitement, I knew it had to be this one. Thanks, everyone, for the opportunity to draw it, and thanks above all to my mom.

—Shaenon K. Garrity

Growing up, *Peanuts* was the comic strip I never quite understood but somehow couldn't stop reading. I didn't get why Charlie Brown kept going to kick the football again and again—I think that's a joke for adults, something that makes more sense now than it did when I was young. I just knew that I wanted to hang out in their cheerful town, go to summer camp, and play baseball with the gang. Also, as a shy kid who rarely spoke up, I wanted to be as tough as Lucy.

—Molly Ostertag



AFTERWORD

When we first explored the idea of creating a monthly comic book with BOOM! it was with no small amount of trepidation.

At the Schulz Studio we are very sensitive to the idea of "new content" and we try to avoid it whenever possible on licensed products: toys, games, t-shirts, pencil cases and notebooks. But for comic book stories, we knew we would need to expand on existing content, if for no other reason than to fully exploit the art form of the comic book format.

In a comic book the backgrounds would have room for cinematic panel designs. The sort of panoramic scope that a newspaper comic has no space for. But to fully embrace the cinematic scope that comic books provide would be to abandon the linear style that Schulz had so skillfully mastered in his comic strip. The minute we saw an exploded three quarter view of the *Peanuts* world we knew we had to dial back. In as much as the "voice" of Schulz is at the heart of the comic, so is his design aesthetic.

The simple side view, the loosely inked silhouette and never seeing the bottom of Snoopy's doghouse leave the ground while in flight; these are staples of the *Peanuts* universe and to depart from them is to lose elements that are intrinsic to the work.

There's purity, a simplicity in the design of *Peanuts* that is as signature to the work as phrases like "good grief."

I heard Sparky say more than once that comics should remain rooted in what they do best. He said it was a mistake for cartoonists to imitate what was happening on TV or in movies with comics. He was getting at the idea that comics could (and should) have a unique voice, a unique perspective; sometimes with a singular voice, not unlike a poet.

A comic strip doesn't have to be peer reviewed or market tested. It can exist based solely on its own merits. Merits defined by its creator. Does it bring the artist joy? Does it make the viewer laugh? Does it communicate an idea or a feeling?

I spoke to a few hundred elementary school kids recently and during my talk I decided to try an experiment with them. I drew three sets of circles on a large flip pad. These circles eventually became very simple renderings of eyes. By adding the simplest lines and dots, the first set of eyes communicated surprise, the second anger and the third sadness. I turned to the crowded room filled with kids and explained to them that even though none of us were the same age, or the same race, and some of us spoke in different languages, that I was able to communicate three complex emotions to them just by using rudimentary circles and lines. This, my friends, is the power of comics. The power of art.

We take our stewardship of Sparky's art very seriously here at the Schulz Studio. We immerse ourselves in the *Peanuts* world by reading the comic strip as often as possible. None of us can get any nearer to Schulz than by inhabiting the world he created.

We struggled initially with the launch of the content for the *Peanuts* comic book series because no matter how hard we tried to emulate Schulz, none of us are Schulz. There were many discussions about how much original content to allow or how much of the comic strip to incorporate. In the end we decided to use the *Dell Peanuts* comic book series from the sixties as our jumping-off place. We had many discussions with Jeannie and Craig Schulz and at times their comfort level has been challenged because the distinction between comic books and comic strips seems too thin, as both are sequential art forms.

Once we launched the series we also questioned whether we should allow other cartoonists to interpret Schulz in their own style. This was a unique conundrum because only one person ever authored *Peanuts*, unlike Walt Disney or Al Capp or others who shared artistic duties with understudies or studio artists. There had been other artists who ghosted Schulz's work for both books and products, but obviously no one but Schulz ever worked on the comic strip itself.

In the end, we decided that we would make our best attempt to keep the characters on model for the regular monthly comic books, the same way we do for licensed products. But what about all of the cartoonists and illustrators who wanted to participate in the new series? These were gifted artists who had been inspired to become cartoonists by reading *Peanuts*. The desire to give tribute to the man who moved most of us to become cartoonists ended up being the inspiration for this book.

What you hold in your hand is a collection of those tribute comics. In honor of the 65th anniversary of the seminal work that inspired us all. Thank you to everyone who participated in this project. Thank you to BOOM! for making this book a reality.

And thank you, Sparky, for creating *Peanuts*.

—PAIGE BRADDOCK

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THANK YOU, SPARKY

CELEBRATING THE WORKS OF
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